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ROBA



Much adoe about Nothing.

As it hath been sundrie times publikely
acted by the right honourable, the Lord
Chamberlaine his seruants.

Written by William Shakespeare.

George Steuens



L O N D O N
Printed by V.S. for Andrew Wise, and
William Aspley.
1600.

3527

WS

THE NEW HUDSON
SHAKESPEARE

WS

THE COMEDY OF
MUCH ADO
& ABOUT
& NOTHING &

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY
HENRY NORMAN
HUDSON, LL.D. &



EDITED AND REVISED BY
EBENEZER CHARLTON
BLACK LL.D. (GLASGOW)



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PREFACE

The text of this edition of *Much Ado About Nothing* is based upon a collation of the Quarto of 1600, the seventeenth century Folios, the Globe edition, and the Cambridge (W. Aldis Wright) edition of 1891. As compared with the text of the earlier editions of the Hudson Shakespeare, it is conservative. Exclusive of changes in spelling, punctuation, and stage directions, very few emendations by eighteenth century and nineteenth century editors have been adopted; and these, with variations from the First Folio, are indicated in the textual notes. These notes are printed immediately below the text, so that a reader or student may see at a glance the evidence in the case of a disputed reading, and have some definite understanding of the reasons for those differences in the text of Shakespeare which frequently surprise and very often annoy. Such an arrangement should be of special help in the case of a play universally read and often acted, since no two actors or interpreters agree in adhering to one text. A consideration of the more poetical, or the more dramatically effective, of two variant readings will often lead to rich results in awakening a spirit of discriminating interpretation and in developing creative criticism. In no sense is this a textual variorum edition. The variants given are only those of importance and of high authority.

The spelling of the text is modern except in the case of verb terminations in *-ed*, which, when the *e* is silent, are

printed with the apostrophe in its place. This is the general usage in the First Folio. The important contractions in the First Folio which may indicate Elizabethan pronunciation ('i' th'' for 'in the,' 'rememb'red' for 'remember'd,' 'pamp'red' for 'pamper'd,' for example) are also followed. Modern spelling has to a certain extent been adopted in the text variants, but the original spelling has been retained wherever its peculiarities have been the basis for important textual criticism and emendation. The punctuation follows to a great extent that of the Folios in the use of the colon and the more important parentheses. In this way the spirit of the original printing, which is often a guide to the original interpretation, is preserved, as it is in the King James version of the Bible.

With the exception of the position of the textual variants, the plan of this edition is similar to that of the earlier editions of the Hudson Shakespeare. It is impossible to specify the various instances of revision and rearrangement in the matter of the Introduction and the interpretative notes, but the endeavor has been to retain all that gave the Hudson Shakespeare its unique place and to add the results of what seems vital and permanent in later inquiry and research. In this edition, as in the volumes of the series already published, the chapters entitled Sources, Date of Composition, Early Editions, Diction and Versification, Title of the Play, Duration of Action, Dramatic Construction and Development, with Analysis by Act and Scene, and Stage History are wholly new. In this edition, too, is introduced a chronological chart covering the important events of Shakespeare's life as man and as author and indicating in parallel columns his relation to contemporary writers and events. As a guide

to reading clubs and literary societies, there has been appended to the Introduction a table of the distribution of characters in the play, giving the acts and scenes in which each character appears and the number of lines spoken by each. The index of words and phrases has been so arranged as to serve both as a glossary and as a guide to the more important grammatical differences between Elizabethan and modern English.

While it is important that the principle of *suum cuique* be attended to so far as is possible in matters of research and scholarship, it is becoming more and more difficult to give every man his own in Shakespearian annotation, but the list of authorities given on page lv will indicate the chief source of much that has gone to enrich the value of this edition. Especial acknowledgment is here made of the obligations to Dr. William Aldis Wright and Dr. Horace Howard Furness, whose work in the collation of Quartos, Folios, and the more important English and American editions of Shakespeare has been of so great value to all subsequent editors and investigators.

With regard to the general plan of this edition, Professor William Peterfield Trent, of Columbia University, has offered valuable suggestions and given important advice. In the case of *Much Ado About Nothing* particular acknowledgment is due to Dr. Francis Kingsley Ball. To his critical acumen and literary sagacity are due the explanations connected with the return to the original text in I, i, 138-140; IV, i, 197; and V, i, 16.

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FACSIMILE

TITLE-PAGE, QUARTO OF 1600.	<i>Frontispiece</i>
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INTRODUCTION

The main story of *Much Ado About Nothing* turns upon a stratagem by which a lover, Claudio, on the eve of his marriage is made to believe that his betrothed, Hero, is unfaithful. She has been personated by one of her waiting women and so exposed to peril and disgrace. Claudio accuses Hero before the altar and breaks off the marriage. The repudiated bride is overcome with humiliation. It is given out that she is dead, but the villainy of which she is the victim is unmasked by the help of a pompous parish constable, Dogberry, whose watchmen have overheard the story of the plot, and after complications and disguises Hero is restored to Claudio.

With the more serious matter of the play is inwoven the love-making of Hero's cousin Beatrice and Claudio's friend Benedick. They appear first as witty and brilliant jesters at love, flouting each other in an atmosphere of banter and good-humored disdain, but by a trick their friends make them believe that each loves the other, and the tragic relations in which Hero is involved bring out what is deepest and noblest in their natures. They agree to befriend the slandered bride, and when Hero is restored to Claudio, Benedick and Beatrice plight troth as man and wife. "Perhaps," says Hazlitt, "the middle point of comedy was never more nicely hit, in which the ludicrous blends with the tender, and our follies, turning round against themselves, in support of our affections, retain nothing but their humanity."

I. SOURCES

The leading incidents of *Much Ado About Nothing* had been the property of European story-tellers from the fifth century onwards,¹ and when Shakespeare took the old story and introduced into it the high comedy connected with Beatrice and Benedick, and made Dogberry and his fellows defeat the machinations of Don John, he was true to his usual plan of taking for the framework of a play a theme of general interest and common appeal, and then adding material for plot and motive from his own superb knowledge of human nature and humorous appreciation of the important part played in the drama of life by man's oddities and stupidities.

THE STORY OF HERO AND CLAUDIO

1. *Bandello's Novelle*. Capell² was the first to draw attention to the parallel between the main plot of *Much Ado About Nothing* and one of the tales (*Novelle*, printed in 1554) of the Italian poet and story-writer Bandello (Matteo Bandello, 1480-1562). The similarity is in names and incidents. In Bandello's story King Piero d'Aragona (cf. Don Pedro of Aragon) has established his court at Messina after a successful war in which he has conquered Charles of Anjou. With him is one of his favorites, Signior Timbreo di Cardona, who is enamored of Fenicia, the young daughter of a poor but

¹ Weichberger, in an article on *The Original Sources of Much Ado About Nothing* (*Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, XXXIV), traces the story back to the late Greek romance of *Chæreas and Callirhoe* by Chariton. For an interesting Spanish variant, *Tirante el Blanco*, mentioned by Cervantes, see Dunlop, *History of Fiction*.

² *Notes and Various Readings of Shakespeare*, 1779-1783.

noble gentleman, Lionato de' Lionati (cf. Leonato). Like Claudio in the play, he courts her by proxy and they are betrothed, but one Girondo, who also loves Fenicia, conspires to prevent the marriage. He insinuates to Timbreo that she is disloyal and, to make good the charge, he arranges to have his own hired servant, in the dress of a gentleman and "perfumed like a lover," ascend a ladder and enter the house of Lionato at night by a window in a lonely part of the house, where Fenicia is often seen by day. Timbreo is hidden in the garden where he can witness the proceeding. Next morning the friend who had negotiated the betrothal is sent by Timbreo to Lionato with the announcement that he has broken off the match because of the disloyalty of his daughter. The messenger makes the accusation in the presence of all the family. Lionato declares that the charge is only a pretext, and that the real reason for the rejection of his daughter is her small dowry. Fenicia falls in a swoon; it is thought that she is dead, and preparations are made for her burial. She revives and is sent secretly to an uncle's country house; but to hush all rumors and suspicions that may affect her good name, her father proclaims that she is dead. Her obsequies are performed with pomp; a monument is set up in the church, and on it is placed her epitaph in verse (cf. V, iii, 1-23). Girondo now becomes so tortured by remorse that in the church, before Fenicia's tomb, he confesses his villainy to Timbreo. Timbreo forgives, and together they go to Lionato and throw themselves upon his mercy. Lionato forgives them and asks that he may be allowed to choose a bride for Timbreo should he ever care to wed. A year passes and Timbreo seeks the help of Lionato, who introduces to him his former bride under the name Lucilla.

She has so grown in beauty and stature that at first Timbreo does not recognize her. When he discovers who she is, he begs her forgiveness, and he marries her under her old name. Gironde meanwhile has fallen in love with her sister Belfiore and become betrothed to her, and the story closes with a description of an entertainment given by King Piero in honor of the two brides.

2. *Belleforest's Histoires Tragiques*. A free and somewhat elaborated translation of Bandello's story into French was made by Belleforest (François de Belle-Forest Comingeois) and published in 1582 in the *Histoires Tragiques*. Belleforest speaks of his versions of Bandello's tales as enriched ("enrichies outre l'invention de l'Auteur"), and he introduces into the story of Timbrée de Cardone, as the hero is named, much sentimental moralizing that is not found in the original. But he adds nothing to the vital incidents or action, though here and there, as Furness has pointed out,¹ are dramatic suggestions not in Bandello. In the fact that Shakespeare, always quick to turn such suggestions to good account, made no use of them may be read an argument against his having taken his material from Belleforest.

3. *A Lost Play*. It is not improbable that in the composition of *Much Ado About Nothing* Shakespeare had before him an earlier play on the subject, now lost. Here and there in the stage directions of the Quarto and Folios are suggestions of such a play; for example, in the mention of Hero's mother² (see note I, i, 1, and textual variants, II, i, 1) and in

¹ *A New Variorum, Much Ado About Nothing*, Preface, xxv.

² The name is given as Innogen. It is interesting to note the resemblance between this name and Imogen, the wife of Posthumus Leonatus, in *Cymbeline*.

the introduction of John the Bastard in I, i, 206 (see textual variants). A bit of external evidence supporting this theory is the following reference in the Accounts of the Court Revels in 1574: "my L. of Leicester's men showed their matter of *panecia*." This "matter of *panecia*," shown or given by Lord Leicester's players, may have been a play dealing with Phenicia or Fenicia, the heroine of Bandello's story. *Die Schoene Phaenicia* is a German play on this subject, written between 1595 and 1605 by Jakob Ayrrer of Nuremberg. Belleforest's version of the story, or one of its German imitations, is followed somewhat closely by Ayrrer, and as, with all the differences, his play has many points in common with Shakespeare's, which are found in neither Belleforest nor Bandello,¹ the evidence for such an intermediary source as a lost play is strengthened.²

THE PERSONATING OF HERO

1. *Ariosto's Orlando Furioso*. As was first pointed out by Langbaine,³ the personating of Hero at the chamber window by her gentlewoman Margaret has a probable source in the story of Ariodante (Ariodant) and Genevra (Ginevra) in the fifth book of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, printed in 1515-1516. Here the villain is a rival lover. Genevra, the heroine, has rejected the suit of Polynesso and pledged her hand to Ariodante. Polynesso bribes her attendant Dalinda to dress

¹ A comic underplot, for example. Ayrrer inwove with the main story the ongoing and rough banter of Jahn the Clown and Anna Maria, a lady's maid, which ended in the complete turning of the tables on Jahn.

² See Simrock, *Die Quellen des Shakespeare*; Cohn, *Shakespeare in Germany*.

³ *Account of the English Dramaticke Poets*, 1691.

in the clothes of her mistress and personate her while he climbs by night to her window. Ariodante is stationed where he sees all, and he is completely deceived.

2. *English Translations.* Evidence of the popularity of English versions of the story of Ariodante and Genevra is abundant. One version by Peter Beverley was entered on *The Stationers' Registers*, 1565-1566, under the title, *tragegall and pleasaunte history Ariounder Jeneuor*,¹ and in 1591 was printed a verse translation of the whole of Ariosto's poem by Sir John Harington, who in a note to the fifth book refers to the incidents related there as being historical, and adds, "sure the tale is a pretie comicall matter, and hath bin written in English verse some few yeares past (learnedly and with good grace) though in verse of another kind, by M. George Turberuil."² The story had also been dramatized, as is made clear by the following entry in the Accounts of the Court Revels of 1581-1583: "A Historie of Ariodante and Geneuora shewed before her Matie [Majesty] on Shrove-tuesdaie at night enacted by Mr. Mulcasters children."

3. *The Faerie Queene.* In *The Faerie Queene*, II, iv, 16-33, published in 1590, Spenser made the incident of the personating of a mistress by a "faultie Handmayd" a dramatic situation in the allegory of Sir Guyon, or Temperance. In Spenser's narrative the scene of the deception is not mentioned. Phaon, the injured lover, tells Guyon the story of his wrongs:

The whiles to me the treachour did remoue
His craftie engin, and as he had sayd,
Me leading, in a secret corner layd,

¹ According to Warton, this was reprinted in 1600, under the title *The tragecall and pleasaunte history of Ariodanto and Jeneura*.

² There is no trace of this in Turberville's extant works.

The sad spectatour of my Tragedie ;
 Where left, he went, and his owne false part playd,
 Disguised like that groome of base degree,
 Whom he had feignd th' abuser of my loue to bee.

Eftsoones he came vnto th' appointed place,
 And with him brought Pryene, rich arayd,
 In Claribellaes clothes. Her proper face
 I not discerned in that darkesome shade,
 But weend it was my loue.

"That groome of base degree" is an effective description of Borachio, and in two lines from an earlier stanza,

He either enuying my toward good,
 Or of him selfe to treason ill disposd,

the character of Don John and his springs of action are foreshadowed.

THE STORY OF BENEDICK AND BEATRICE

1. *Shakespeare's Earlier Plays.* The comic scenes and the subplot in Shakespeare's plays usually show more invention of story and incident than is found in the main plot. No unmistakable source has been discovered for the scenes in which Benedick¹ and Beatrice are the chief figures other

¹ In *New Illustrations of Shakespeare* (1845), pages 227-244. Hunter sought to prove that in the humors of Benedick was a reference to William Lord Herbert (afterwards Earl of Pembroke and one of "the most noble and incomparable paire of brethren" to whom the First Folio is dedicated), whose unwillingness to marry was long the talk of London. Hermann Grimm (*Fünfzehn Essays*, Berlin, 1875) held that Benedick was modeled on the hero of Duke Heinrich Julius's comedy, *Vincentius Ladislaus*, printed in 1599, where in the opening scene a servant describes his master Vincentius as a bragging fool who has ordered to be posted on the door of his lodging a bill setting forth his noble and heroic qualities (cf. I, i, 36-39).

than that they are developments and elaborations of similar scenes in Shakespeare's earlier plays, those in *Love's Labour's Lost*, for example, where Biron (Berowne) and Rosaline engage in a merry war of words. Such badinage and skirmishes of wit¹ show the influence of the pointed, balanced dialogue which Lyly introduced into the diction of the English drama, in such plays as *Campaspe* and *Endimion*.

2. *Benedicte and Betteris*. It is not improbable that Shakespeare had before him an older play on the subject of Benedick and Beatrice, distinct from the lost play based on Bandello's *novella*. Traces of such an older play are found in Beatrice's promise to eat all of Benedick's killing (I, i, 40-41), and in her assertion that once before Benedick had won her heart, but with false dice (II, i, 252-255). This older play may have been the *Benedicte and Betteris*,² which was one of several plays acted at Court in the spring of 1613, at the time of the marriage of Princess Elizabeth and the Prince Palatine Elector. That *Benedicte and Betteris* was a distinct play from *Much Ado About Nothing* is practically proved by Lord Treasurer Stanhope's Accounts, which record that warrants were issued, and on the same day, for the performance of both plays. There is no evidence that a play was given twice during these marriage festivities.³

¹ Professor Herford finds an interesting parallel between the 'wit-combats' of Benedick and Beatrice and the dialogues of Benedetto and Donzella Katharine in Greene's *Farewell to Folly*, printed in 1591.

² This spelling suggests what may have been the old pronunciation.

³ *Much adoe abowte nothinge* seems to have been presented before Prince Charles, the Princess Elizabeth, and the Prince Palatine Elector; *Benedicte and Betteris* before King James. In Charles I's copy of the Second Folio, preserved at Windsor Castle, 'Benedik and Betrice' is written evidently by himself against the title of

DOGBERRY, VERGES, AND THE WATCH

Dogberry, Verges,¹ and the Watch are among the most famous of Shakespeare's creations in broad comedy. As with Bottom and his fellows in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*,² so effective is the presentation of the detail, and so vivid are the humorous touches, that the characters suggest a development from personal observation. But as the comic interlude of Bottom and his crew was anticipated in the entertainment given by the "Nine Worthies" in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Dull in the same play may be regarded as an early study of the ways of pompous, blundering constables. The later Elizabethan drama has more than one humorous treatment of watchmen, evidently inspired by Shakespeare's work, notably Middleton's *Blurt, Master-Constable*, printed in 1602 (see below, Stage History); but an interesting pre-Shakespearian study of the same kind is in Lyly's *Endimion*, produced probably as early as 1579.³

FRIAR FRANCIS

Among the other characters in *Much Ado About Nothing* elaborated by Shakespeare from material in his earlier plays, Friar Francis is conspicuous. His calm and self-possession

Much Ado About Nothing, "not perhaps," says Halliwell-Phillipps, "meaning a new title, but merely that these were the leading, and probably his favourite, characters."

¹ For the origin of the names see note, III, iii, 1.

² "Dogberry's conceit, and Verges's belief in him, are like Bottom's . . . and his companions' belief in him." — Furnivall.

³ The instructions which Dogberry gives to the Watch may be a burlesque on *The Statutes of the Streets*, printed in 1595. See note, III, iii, 61-62.

amid the turmoil of the church scene, and the poetry of his expression, recall the tranquillity and benignity with which Friar Laurence moves through the passion and agitation of *Romeo and Juliet*. Furnivall has pointed out the similarity between Friar Francis's advice that Hero shall be supposed dead for a while and Friar Laurence's suggestion that Juliet should counterfeit death for forty-two hours.

SHAKESPEARE'S USE OF SOURCES

Originality of plot and incident meant little to Shakespeare. For the material of his plots he preferred such stories as were commonly known, so that from the first his plays had ties of popular association and interest. What he added in the treatment of incident and in characterization was so made to knit in with the borrowed matter by mutual participation and interaction as to give a new life and meaning to the whole. Here, as always, the soul of originality consists in something far deeper and more essential than any mere sorting or linking of incidents so as to form an attractive story. On the vital workings of nature in the development of individual character, and not on anything so superficial or mechanical as a mere framework of incident, depends the real life of the play. One of Shakespeare's methods seems to have been first to mark out or else to adopt a given course of action, and then to conceive and work out his characters accordingly, making them such as would naturally cohere with and sustain the action, so that an inward, vital, and essential relation is felt between what they are and what they do. Thus there is nothing arbitrary or mechanical in the sorting together of persons and actions: the two stand together under a living

law, instead of being gathered into a mere formal and outward juxtaposition. The persons act so because they are so, and not because the author willed to put them through such a course of action: what comes from them is truly rooted in them and is generated vitally out of the nature within them, so that their deeds are the veritable pulsations of their hearts. The course of action was borrowed. But there was no borrowing in the characteristic matter. The personal figures in the old stories are in themselves unmeaning and characterless. The actions ascribed to them have no ground or reason in anything that they are: what they do, or rather seem to do, — for there is no real doing in the case, — proceeds not at all from their own natures or wills, but purely because the author chose to have it so. So that the persons and incidents are to all intents and purposes put together arbitrarily and not under any vital law of human nature. Any other set of actions might just as well be tacked on to the same persons; any other persons might just as well be put through the same course of action. This merely outward and formal connection between the incidents and characters holds generally in the old tales from which Shakespeare borrowed his plots; while in his workmanship the connection becomes inherent and essential.

II. DATE OF COMPOSITION

The date of composition of *Much Ado About Nothing* falls within 1600, the later time limit (*terminus ante quem*), when the play was entered in *The Stationers' Registers*, and 1598, the earlier time limit (*terminus post quem*). The weight of evidence is in favor of the winter of 1598-1599.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

1. *Negative.* *Much Ado About Nothing* is not mentioned by Francis Meres in the *Palladis Tamia*, published in the autumn of 1598. Here Meres gives a list of twelve noteworthy Shakespeare plays, and the probability is that a play so popular in subject and treatment as *Much Ado About Nothing* would have been mentioned had it been in existence at that time.¹

2. *Positive.* *The Stationers' Registers.* The earliest reference to *Much Ado About Nothing* is the following entry in *The Stationers' Registers* : ²

my lord chamberlens menns plaies Entred

27 may 1600 viz

to master *A morall of clothe breches and velvet hose*

Robertes

27 May *Allarum to London* |

To hym

4 Augusti

<i>As you like yt</i> a booke	}	to be staied ³
<i>Henry the Ffift</i> a booke		
<i>Euery man in his humour</i> a booke		
<i>The commedie of mucche A doo about nothing</i> a booke		

¹ Among the plays by Shakespeare mentioned by Meres is *Loue labours wonne*, and ingenious attempts have been made to identify this with *Much Ado About Nothing*, but the evidence for this identification produced by Brae and others is inconclusive. See A. E. Brae, *Collier, Coleridge, and Shakespeare*; A. H. Tolman, "Shakespeare's 'Love's Labour's Won'" in *The Views about Hamlet and other Essays*.

² Professor E. Arber's *Transcripts of The Stationers' Registers* (1554-1640), 4 vols., 1875-1877.

³ 'To be staied' is the old expression for 'not to be printed.'

While no year is attached to the '4 August,' it is obvious that the year 1600 is implied. Apart from the proximity of '1600' in the previous entry, we find that later in the same month, with the year '42 *Regin[a]e*,' that is 1600, clearly given, *Much Ado About Nothing* is entered again, the 'staying' having been removed. The following is the second entry as transcribed by Arber, who notes that this is "the first time our great poet's name appears in these Registers":

23 Augusti

Andrewe Wyse William Aspley	Entred for their copies vnder the handes of the wardens Two bookes. the one called <i>Muche a Doo about nothinge</i> . Thother the second parte of the history of King Henry the iiij th with the humours of Sir John Ffallstaff: Wrytten by master Shakespere xij ^d ¹
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The play thus entered was issued as a Quarto within the year. On the title-page (see frontispiece of this volume) is the statement that it had already been "sundrie times publickly acted." This would suggest the previous year as the latest possible date for the composition of the play.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

I. *Allusions within the Play.* *Much Ado About Nothing* contains no unmistakable allusions to contemporary events or persons. As has already been noted, investigators have tried to connect Benedick's speeches with Pembroke and his well-known unwillingness to marry; others see references in I, i, 8-9, I, i, 46, to the Irish campaigns of Essex, and in III, i, 9-11, to his rebellion, but there is not a bit of evidence

¹ twelvepence. The usual price of a Quarto was sixpence.

to support these claims. Matter for these two passages in the first scene of the play is in Bandello's *novella*, and the third reference would be quite as applicable to Cecil as to Essex. Equally futile is the theory that in "that Deformed," he that "wears a lock," III, iii, 151, is an allusion to one of the prominent characters in Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, a play not acted until 1600.¹

2. *Qualities of Style and Diction.* The internal evidence of style, the perfect weaving of tragedy and comedy, and the energy of the characterization throughout strengthen the external evidence in favor of placing *Much Ado About Nothing* in the middle period of Shakespeare's productive years, to which belong *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night*. The workmanship is of about the same cast and grain as that of *As You Like It*; sustained and equal, easy, natural, and everywhere alive with the exhilarations of wit or humour or poetry, but without the laboured smoothness and formal symmetry of Shakespeare's earlier plays, or the penetrating energy and quick, sinewy movement of his later ones. Compared with some of its predecessors, the play shows a decided

¹ Of no greater value than these surmises and conjectures are the ingenious conclusions of F. G. Fleay (*Life and Work of Shakespeare*, London, 1886) as to the date of composition. On the two definite time references in the play he built up his much-discussed theory as follows: "It is very frequent in old plays to find days of the week and month mentioned; and when this is the case, they nearly always correspond to the almanac of the year in which the play was written. . . . Comparing I, i, 262-263, 'The sixth of July. Your loving friend, Benedick,' and II, i, 328-329, 'Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night,' [both statements were made on the same day] we find that the sixth of July came on a Monday; this suits the years 1590 and 1601, but none between; an indication that the original play was written in 1590."

growth in what may be termed virility of mind; a wider scope, a higher reach, a firmer grasp, have been attained; the dramatist has come to read nature less through "the spectacles of books" and does not hesitate to meet her face to face and to trust and try himself alone with her. The result is a greater freshness and reality of delineation. Here the characters have nothing of a dim, equivocal hearsay air about them, such as marks in some measure Shakespeare's earlier efforts in comedy. The characters, indeed, are not pitched in so high a key nor conceived in so much breadth and vigour as in several of the plays written at earlier dates; the plan of the work did not require this or even admit of it, but the workmanship shows everywhere more ripeness of art and faculty than is shown in *The Taming of the Shrew* or even in *The Merchant of Venice*.

The case for the date of composition suggested by the other evidence is further supported by the diction of the play, the proportion of prose to verse, the quality of the blank verse, the use of rhyme, and the results of a rigid application of the various metrical tests.

III. EARLY EDITIONS

QUARTO OF 1600

Much Ado About Nothing, having been entered in *The Stationers' Registers*, as noted above, was printed for the first time in 1600 in a sixpenny Quarto, called in this edition of the New Hudson Shakespeare simply the Quarto or, in the textual variants, Q. The title-page is given in facsimile as the frontispiece of this volume.

The Quarto presents an excellent text, and on it is based that of most modern editions. The statement on the title-page that the play had been "sundrie times publicly acted," the stage directions (see notes, I, i, 1; II, iii, 34; IV, ii, 1, etc.), and the circumstances of registration and publication indicate that the Quarto was printed from an acting copy of the play, probably a prompter's copy, without any supervision by the author.

FOLIOS

The Quarto was the only edition of *Much Ado About Nothing* issued until it was printed in 1623 in the First Folio (designated in the textual notes of this edition F₁). The First Folio is the famous volume in which all Shakespeare's collected plays (with the exception of *Pericles*, first printed in the Third Folio) were first given to the world. *Much adoe about Nothing*, as it is called in the running title, stands between *The Comedy of Errors* and *Love's Labour's Lost*, occupying pages 101-121, in the division named 'Comedies.'

The text of the First Folio is based upon that of the Quarto; here and there it provides a better reading, and it is more exact in its stage directions, but occasionally the First Folio has blunders due to the printer's carelessness, which are not in the Quarto. Certain passages and parts of lines were omitted in the First Folio, probably for the reasons suggested in the notes (see notes, III, ii, 29-33; IV, ii, 17-20, etc.). All the more important differences between the two texts are indicated in the textual notes of this edition.

The Second Folio, F₂ (1632), corrects many of the misprints of the First Folio; and this corrected text is repeated

with few changes, except in the way of slightly modernized spelling, in the Third Folio, F₃ (1663, 1664), and in the Fourth Folio, F₄ (1685).

ROWE'S EDITIONS

The first critical editor of Shakespeare's plays was Nicholas Rowe, poet laureate to George I. His first edition was issued in 1709 in six octavo volumes. In this edition Rowe, an experienced playwright, marked the entrances and exits of the characters and introduced many new stage directions and directions for scene settings. In the Quarto there is no division of *Much Ado About Nothing* into acts and scenes, and in the Folios the acts and the first scene only are indicated. Rowe made the subdivision into scenes and added the first list of dramatis personæ. A second edition, in eight volumes, was published in 1714. Rowe followed very closely the text of the Fourth Folio, but modernized spelling, punctuation, and occasionally grammar.

IV. DICTION AND VERSIFICATION

PROSE

Of the 2825 lines in *Much Ado About Nothing*, 2105 are in prose, a preponderance of prose over verse exceeded only in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Of the other plays *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* come nearest to these in the large proportion of prose to verse. The character of these plays¹

¹ *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night* belong to the same period of Shakespeare's life (1598-1601), and make up the remarkable group of what Furnivall calls "the three sparkling, sunny, or sweet-time comedies."

indicates in a general way Shakespeare's use of prose in the work of his maturity. Prose predominates in comedy and where a conversational rather than an emotional and imaginative effect is desired.

In the development of the English drama the use of prose as a vehicle of expression, entitled to equal rights with verse was due to Lyly. He was the first to use prose with power and distinction in original plays and did memorable service in preparing the way for Shakespeare's achievement. Interesting attempts have been made to explain Shakespeare's distinctive use of verse and prose; and of recent years there has been much discussion of the question "whether we are justified in supposing that Shakespeare was guided by any fixed principle in his employment of verse and prose, or whether he merely employed them, as fancy suggested, for the sake of variety and relief."¹ It is a significant fact that in many of his earlier plays there is little or no prose, and that the proportion of prose to blank verse increases with the decrease of rhyme. Six kinds of prose may be distinguished in the plays: (1) The prose of formal documents, as in letters and proclamations. So the formal preliminaries to the projected marriage of Hero and Claudio (IV, i, 1-20) are set forth in prose dialogue. (2) The prose of 'low life' and the speech of comic characters, as in all the scenes in which Dogberry and his associates appear. This is a development of the humorous prose found, for example, in Greene's comedies that deal with humble life. (3) The colloquial prose

¹ Churton Collins, *Shakespeare as a Prose Writer*. See Delius, *Die Prosa in Shakespeares Dramen* (*Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, V, 227-273); Janssen, *Die Prosa in Shakespeares Dramen*; Hiram Corson, *An Introduction to the Study of Shakespeare*, pages 83-98.

of dialogue and of matter-of-fact narrative, as in I, i, 152-268, ii, iii; II, i, 312-355, ii, iii, 87-145, etc. Shakespeare was "the creator of colloquial prose, of the prose most appropriate for drama." — Churton Collins. (4) The prose of high comedy, vivacious, sparkling, and flashing with repartee, as in Beatrice's speeches and the 'wit-combats' between her and Benedick. (5) The prose of abnormal mentality. (6) Impassioned or highly wrought poetical and rhetorical prose. Of these kinds of prose the fifth and the sixth, so conspicuous in *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*, have naturally no place in *Much Ado About Nothing*.

The general principles which underlie the transition from prose to verse and from verse to prose in Shakespeare's later plays are well illustrated in *Much Ado About Nothing*. In I, i, prose gives way to verse when, on Benedick's departure (line 268), the dialogue begins to take a more serious or emotional turn, and Claudio tells Don Pedro of his passion for Hero. So in II, i, 156-166, the soliloquy of Claudio, when he thinks he has been betrayed, is in verse, all that precedes and all that follows, made up of witty conversation and matter introduced for purposes of information, being in prose. Prose is the natural speech of Benedick, but when he is entangled in the deeper emotional life of the play, as in IV, i, 239-244; V, iv, 8-9, 18, 20-22, 27-31, etc., his utterance rises to the pitch of verse. Borachio speaks in verse at the close of the passionate, almost tragic scene (V, i, 287-290), when he makes the confession which alone relieves the utter villainy of the man. Elsewhere, as befits his character, he speaks in prose. In the same scene Leonato, who has been speaking in verse, drops to the level of prose when he thanks Dogberry for the second time (lines 305-306).

BLANK VERSE

Less than a third of *Much Ado About Nothing* is in blank verse¹—the unrhymed, iambic five-stress (decasyllabic) verse, or iambic pentameter, introduced into England from Italy by Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, about 1540, and used by him in a translation of the second and fourth books of the *Æneid*. Nicholas Grimald (*Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557) employed the measure for the first time in English original poetry, and its roots began to strike deep into British soil and absorb substance. It is peculiarly significant that Sackville and Norton should have used it as the measure of *Gorboduc*, the first English tragedy (performed by "the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple" on January 18, 1561, and first printed in 1565). About the time when Shakespeare arrived in London the infinite possibilities of blank verse as a vehicle for dramatic poetry and passion were being shown by Kyd, and above all by Marlowe. Blank verse as used by Shakespeare is really an epitome of the development of the measure in connection with the English drama. In his earlier plays the blank verse is often similar to that of *Gorboduc*. The tendency is to adhere to the syllable-counting principle, to make the line the unit, the sentence and phrase coinciding with the line (end-stopped verse), and to use five perfect iambic feet to the line. In plays of the middle period, such as *The Merchant of Venice*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As*

¹ The term 'blank verse' was just coming into use in Shakespeare's day. It seems to have been used for the first time in literature in Nash's Preface to Greene's *Menaphon*, where we find the expression, "the swelling bumbast of bragging blanke verse." Shakespeare uses the expression three times, always humorously or satirically. Cf. V, ii, 32.

You Like It, and *Twelfth Night*, written between 1596 and 1602, the blank verse is more like that of Kyd and Marlowe, with less monotonous regularity in the structure and an increasing tendency to carry on the sense from one line to another without a syntactical or rhetorical pause at the end of the line (run-on verse, *enjambement*). Redundant syllables now abound, and the melody is richer and fuller. In Shakespeare's later plays the blank verse breaks away from bondage to formal line limits and sweeps all along with it in freedom, power, and organic unity. In the blank verse of *Much Ado About Nothing* we have the transition from the earlier style to the later. Trochees, spondees, anapæsts, dactyls, run-on lines, incomplete lines, and mid-line speech endings give to the verse flexibility and power; and end-stopped lines abound, many of them (for instance, I, i, 274, 286, 293, etc.) examples of normal five-stress iambic pentameter.

In the 618 lines of blank verse in *Much Ado About Nothing* are found 129 feminine (or double, redundant, hypermetrical) endings, but only one weak ending and one light ending.¹

ALEXANDRINES

While French prosodists apply the term 'Alexandrine' only to a twelve-syllable line, with the pause after the sixth syllable, it is generally used in English to designate iambic six-stress verse, or iambic hexameter, of which we have examples in

¹ Light endings, as defined by Ingram, are such words as *am*, *can*, *do*, *has*, *I*, *thou*, etc., on which "the voice can to a certain small extent dwell"; weak endings are words like *and*, *for*, *from*, *if*, *in*, *of*, *or*, which "are so essentially proclitic . . . that we are forced to run them, in pronunciation no less than in sense, into the closest connection with the opening words of the succeeding line."

IV, i, 98, 155, and 249. This was a favorite Elizabethan measure, and it was common in moral plays and the earlier heroic drama. English literature has no finer examples of this verse than the last line of each stanza of *The Faerie Queen*. In *Much Ado About Nothing* are only five Alexandrines.

RHYME

In the history of the English drama, rhyme as a vehicle of expression precedes blank verse and prose. Miracle plays, moral plays, and interludes are all in rhyming measures. In Shakespeare may be seen the same development. A progress from more to less rhyme is a sure index to his growth as a dramatist and a master of expression. In the early *Love's Labour's Lost* are more than 500 rhyming five-stress iambic couplets; in the very late *The Winter's Tale* there is not one.¹

1. *Five-stress Iambic Verse*. In *Much Ado About Nothing* are only 20 rhyming five-stress iambic couplets,² and these are used for the following purposes: (1) to give epigrammatic effect to a sententious generalization, III, i, 105-106; and (2), as so frequently in Elizabethan plays, to mark an exit or round off a speech, III, i, 115-116; V, iv, 46-47. Alternate rhymes in five-stress verse, or quatrains, having the effect of lyric stanzas, are found only in Shakespeare's plays

¹ The Chorus speech introducing Act IV is excepted as not part of the regular dialogue.

² In II, i, 84-87 (see note), three brief speeches make a couplet of seven-stress (heptameter, septenary) iambic verse, or 'fourteeners.' Such verse is common in early Elizabethan plays, and it suits the mock-heroic strain of Don Pedro's first speech. But in Hero's rejoinder and Don Pedro's wholly serious "Speak low if you speak love," the rhythm and rhyme are probably accidental. Some editors print the lines as verse.

written before 1600. Beatrice's emotion finds expression in two such quatrains, III, i, 107-114.¹ Cf. IV, i, 246-249 (where the last line of the quatrain is an Alexandrine); V, iii, 24-27, 30-33.

2. *Trochaic Verse*. Shakespeare's theory of the technique of verse and his sense of the appropriateness of certain rhythms to the expression of certain moods and emotions may be read in the fact that he makes his supernatural beings so often express themselves in trochaic verse, with a marked preference for four-stress (tetrameter) effects. In such verse is the dialogue of the witches in *Macbeth* and the fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Probably the circumstances of time and place determine the verse of the four-stress trochaic couplet, V, iii, 22-23, which Claudio speaks after the "solemn hymn" has been sung or chanted.

3. *Lyrics*. (1) "*Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,*" II, iii, 58-70. The verse is the ballad stanza² of four-stress iambic measure alternating with three-stress. (2) "*Done to death by slanderous tongues,*" V, iii, 3-10. The eight lines of the "Epitaph," as this lyric is called in the Folios, are in four-stress trochaic verse catalectic, the first four lines rhyming alternately (see note on the concluding couplet, lines 9-10). (3) "*Pardon, goddess of the night,*" V, iii, 12-21.

¹ With the inclusion of the rhyming couplet at the close, Beatrice's utterance may be regarded as the last ten lines of a Shakespearean sonnet, or a quatrain followed by such a six-line stanza as that used in *Venus and Adonis*.

² The regular measure of the old ballads seems to have been originally four-stress throughout, with a tendency to drop the last stress in the alternating lines. The development of this tendency gives the measure of the *Robin Hood* ballads, etc., and the common metre of modern hymns.

This dirgelike song consists of two four-stress trochaic couplets catalectic, followed by six lines of two-stress dactylic measure.

4. *Doggerel*. In the earliest comedies, such as *Love's Labour's Lost* and *The Comedy of Errors*, lines of doggerel verse are common in the speeches of the comic characters, but it is rare in the later plays. The only thing approaching doggerel verse in *Much Ado About Nothing* is the snatch beginning "The god of love," hummed by Benedick when awaiting the arrival of Beatrice (V, ii, 25-28). This was printed as prose in the Quarto and Folios, and printed in this way it has a humorous effect which is lost in the arrangement adopted by Capell and modern editors. It was probably a travesty of a song familiar to an Elizabethan audience.

V. TITLE OF THE PLAY

The title of the play, *Much Ado About Nothing*, has given rise to not a little interesting comment. Ulrici¹ held that it denoted the "internal contradiction into which all human existence falls . . . when man, treating important things with playful levity, recklessly follows his momentary impulses, feelings, and caprices." The comment of Oechelhäuser,² on the other hand, is that, as in the case of *Twelfth Night* and *As You Like It*, the title is merely one of "those humorous devices faintly tinged with the reflex irony with which Shakespeare was wont to bring his lighter wares to market." Grant White's theory was that Shakespeare and his contemporaries

¹ *Shakespeares dramatische Kunst*, Leipzig, 1839.

² *Einführungen in Shakespeares Dramen*, Minden, 1885.

called the play *Much Ado About Nothing*, a pun being intended between 'nothing' and 'noting,' which in the Elizabethan time were pronounced alike (see note, II, iii, 54). White's conclusion is:

The play is made up of much ado about noting, that is, watching, observing. All the personages are constantly engaged in noting or watching each other. Hero's sufferings come from noting,—by her uncle's servant, by Claudio, and by Don Pedro; her release and happiness by the noting of the watch; and Benedick and Beatrice are brought together by secretly noting what their friends plot that they should note; and yet the principal serious incident, the accusation of Hero, about which there is so much ado, rests upon nothing.

Such ingenious theories are somewhat beside the mark. The general view of life which the play presents answers well to the obvious significance of the title. All the persons involved have much ado and make much ado, but all the while this much ado is plainly about nothing. F. S. Boas sums the matter up as follows:

The title is admirably suggestive of the character of the piece, which introduces us to a society whose atmosphere is one of perpetual holiday; where everybody, from high to low, having time enough on hand and to spare, indulges in leisurely circuitous fashions of speed and action, productive of mistakes and apprehensions—in short, of much ado which, in the long run, always proves to be about nothing.

VI. DURATION OF ACTION

Specific references to periods of time in a romantic drama, and especially in a Shakespeare play, are likely to mislead when interpreted too literally or pressed too far. Failure to appreciate the difference between a dramatist's point of view

and that of an exact historian has often led to charges of unhappy oversights and glaring inconsistencies. When Leonato appoints Claudio's marriage for "Monday . . . which is hence a just seven-night" (II, i, 329-330), the time taken up in the action of *Much Ado About Nothing* seems to be distinctly delimited. It should cover eight days, from Monday in one week to Monday in the next. In an elaborate time analysis contributed to the *New Shakspeare Society Transactions*, 1879, P. A. Daniel endeavors to make the action of the play agree as far as possible with Leonato's determination, but comes to the conclusion that just as Don Pedro forgets his arrangement to stay at Messina "at the least a month" (I, i, 140-141), so the "just seven-night, and a time too brief, too," to the wedding was also either "forgotten or intentionally set aside, and that only four consecutive days are actually included in the action of the drama." The following is Daniel's final time analysis in tabulated form :

Day 1. — I ; II, i-ii.

Day 2. — II, iii ; III, i-iii.

Day 3. — III, iv-v ; IV ; V, i-ii, iii (in part).

Day 4. — V, iii (in part), iv.

In Porter and Clarke's 'First Folio' edition of the play is an interesting analysis of the duration of the action. Here five days are marked off as passing within the stage action: "the first day being the day of the arrival of Don Pedro, of the Supper, Mask, and Banquet; a second separate day following; a third, designated as the day before the appointed Wedding-day; the appointed Wedding-day; the final fifth day after the appointed Wedding-day, which is in fact the actual Wedding-day triumphantly concluding the play."

VII. DRAMATIC CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

The plot of *Much Ado About Nothing*, like that of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, written about five years earlier, is a complication of three actions determined by three groups of strongly contrasted characters. In both plays the resolving of the main action, in which high-born men and women are the chief persons, is helped by the blunders and stupidities of rustic characters belonging to broad comedy. But the knitting of the minor action, which is humorous throughout, with the main plot, which has in it elements of tragedy, is much closer in the later play than in the earlier and shows superior knowledge of dramatic technique. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, as in *Twelfth Night*, which belongs to the same period of Shakespeare's development, the climax of the minor action is contrived with peculiar skill to force the resolution of the main plot.

Like tragedy, comedy deals with a conflict between an individual force (which may be centered either in one character or in a group of characters acting as one) and environing circumstances. In tragedy the individual (one person or a group) is overwhelmed; in comedy the individual triumphs. In comedy, as in tragedy, five stages may be noted in the plot development: (1) the exposition, or introduction; (2) the complication, rising action, or growth; (3) the climax, crisis, or turning point; (4) the resolution, falling action, or consequence; and (5) the dénouement, catastrophe,¹ or conclusion. Let it not be thought for a moment that each of these stages

¹ "*Catastrophe* — the change or revolution which produces the conclusion or final event of a dramatic piece." — Johnson.

is clearly differentiated. As a rule they pass insensibly into each other, as they do in life. Especially is this true in a play like *Much Ado About Nothing*, where the weaving of the plot is so close and compact.

ANALYSIS BY ACT AND SCENE¹

I. THE EXPOSITION, OR INTRODUCTION (TYING OF THE KNOT)

Act I, Scene i. The opening scene explains the situation, introduces the more important characters, and indicates their relation to one another. Sparkling dialogue in prose prevails; it passes into verse at the close, when the deeper emotional interest of the play is disclosed. Benedick and Beatrice begin their skirmishes of wit. The only shadow is that which falls from the sullen attitude of Don John. Claudio's passion for Hero leads him to question Benedick about her, and this reveals Benedick's greater interest in Beatrice. Don Pedro arranges to mask as Claudio at the "revelling to-night" (line 299) and win Hero for him.

II. THE COMPLICATION, RISING ACTION, OR GROWTH (TYING OF THE KNOT)

Act I, Scene ii. The complication begins with the introduction of such hearsay evidence as Antonio conveys to Leonato. An eavesdropping servant's blunder suggests what may lead afterwards to much ado in the more humorous developments.

Act I, Scene iii. Don John's circumstances and revengeful nature are clearly shown. Borachio's information supplies an opportunity for revenge, and the more tragic entanglements begin.

Act II, Scene i. The main plot is well advanced in this brilliant scene. In spite of Don John, Hero and Claudio are betrothed,

¹ "It must be understood that a play can be analyzed into very different schemes of plot. It must not be thought that one of these schemes is right and the rest wrong; but the schemes will be better or worse in proportion as — while of course representing correctly the facts of the play — they bring out more or less of what ministers to our sense of design." — Moulton.

though Claudio's readiness to believe the villain's insinuations prepares for his behavior later in the play. The skirmishes of wit between Beatrice and Benedick, made more acute by having had to hear what they think of each other, almost develop into open war. The scene closes with the announcement by Don Pedro that he will "undertake one of Hercules' labours, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection th' one with th' other" (lines 334-337).

Act II, Scene ii. The counterplot of Don John and his associates is unfolded. Hero is to be personated at midnight by Margaret, her "waiting gentlewoman."

Act II, Scene iii. The comic subplot to bring Benedick and Beatrice "into a mountain of affection" is successful as far as Benedick is concerned. Snared as a spy, he is made to hear how desperately Beatrice loves him. Between Benedick's soliloquy (lines 7-33), balanced by his superb soliloquy of confession (lines 202-222), and the main dialogue comes Balthasar's song, "Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more," with its mocking echo of the theme of the play.

Act III, Scene i. The complication of the comic subplot is further advanced. Beatrice is caught in the net of the good-natured intriguers, and she is made to overhear how desperately Benedick loves her.

Act III, Scene ii. The comic subplot and the counterplot are linked together and brought into vital connection with the main plot. While Don Pedro and those who have helped him, including Claudio, are making merry over the success of the trick played on Benedick, Don John appears and openly accuses Hero of unfaithfulness to Claudio.

Act III, Scene iii. Dogberry and Verges, the most famous specimens of blundering Bumbledom in literature, are introduced giving the stupidest of instructions to the stupidest of watchmen. By chance the watchmen hear the drunken Borachio tell Conrade the story of the counterplot and they arrest them. The arrest at this stage is a master stroke of dramatic or constructive irony. Readers or spectators are made aware of a happening the true significance of which is unknown to the actors. Thus in this play the artistic demands of comedy are satisfied in what would otherwise have been

an overwhelming tragic situation in the climax, or crisis, of the plot — the repudiation scene in the church. Kreyssig's criticism that Shakespeare here neglected the necessary dramatic sequence of cause and effect in his account of the discovery of the plot is well answered by F. S. Boas: "This roundabout method in which the conspiracy comes to light is entirely in harmony with the tortuous direction that events take throughout the play, while it serves as the source of further complications, and introduces new actors on the scene."

Act III, Scene iv. The dramatic value of this scene in Hero's apartment is that it gives a sense of bustling preparation for the marriage and intensifies interest in the two heroines. A presentiment of tragedy is heavy on Hero's heart. Beatrice reveals her passion for Benedick even in bantering talk with Margaret who, utterly unconscious of the mischief she has done, is in the highest spirits.

Act III, Scene v. In this scene the dramatic irony which prevails throughout the play reaches its height. Dogberry and Verges bring their discovery of the plot against Hero to the governor, the father of the threatened bride. "The fussy haste of Leonato, with a bridal ceremony on his hands, and the fussy self-importance of Dogberry and Verges, resolved to make the most of their accidental find, clash together, and delay the understanding of what has happened until it is too late." — Moulton.

III. THE CLIMAX, CRISIS, OR TURNING POINT (THE KNOT TIED)

Act IV, Scene i, 1-149. In the rejection of Hero by Claudio before the altar every strand of interest in the weaving of the plot is crossed. This repudiation tightens all the elements of main plot and subplots, to use Aristotle's famous figure, into a compact knot of general entanglement.

IV. THE RESOLUTION, FALLING ACTION, OR CONSEQUENCE (THE UNTYING OF THE KNOT)

Act IV, Scene i, 150-249. The beginning of the resolution is singularly impressive. Friar Francis suspects a concealed wrong; he has read innocence in Hero's face, and in a passage of noble poetry he counsels that over her be thrown the veil of a reputed

death until the truth has been learned and slander has been changed to remorse.

Act IV, Scene i, 250-327. The resolution of the comic plot is in the closest relation to the climax of the main plot. The seeming success of the counterplot brings Beatrice and Benedick together, and they plan to do what in them lies to prove the innocence of slandered Hero.

Act IV, Scene ii. The trial of Borachio and Conrade in its comic setting marks another stage in the resolution, and the evidence makes clear that Friar Francis's pious intrigue is being successfully carried out. Dogberry's closing speech (lines 69-80) is one of the triumphs of the literature of broad humor. It goes far to adjust the balance of comedy in an Act which began in tragedy and pathos.

Act V, Scene i. Antonio and Leonato blunderingly seek to avenge the wrong done to Hero; Benedick, spurred on by Beatrice, challenges Claudio; and when Claudio learns from Borachio the truth of the villainy perpetrated, he offers reparation, promises to hang a penitential epitaph on Hero's tomb, and, as a recompense to the family honor, undertakes to marry Leonato's niece, who is, says the father, "almost the copy of my child that's dead" (line 276). This scene helps to establish the friendly relations which existed among the more important characters during the early stages of the complication, but which were dislocated by the shock in the temporary success of the counterplot.

Act V, Scene ii. An episodic scene in which Benedick and Beatrice are shown as lovers.

Act V, Scene iii. Claudio reads his penitential epitaph and hangs it with fitting ceremony upon the tomb. The song "Pardon, goddess of the night," and the alternate rhyme in the dialogue which follows, give a dignity and solemnity befitting the occasion and the place.

V. DÉNOUEMENT, CATASTROPHE, OR CONCLUSION (THE KNOT UNTIED)

Act V, Scene iv. In a Shakespeare comedy the dénouement is swiftly but deftly sketched and trembles with the joyousness of recognition and reconciliation. When Claudio comes to wed the niece of Leonato, he receives the hand of Hero risen from the death of her slandered fame. The humor of the play began with

the flouting of Benedick by Beatrice; it ends with the spectacle of Benedick stopping her mouth with a kiss. It is not without significance that of all Shakespeare's plays, *Much Ado About Nothing* should be the only one that closes with a dance: "Come, come, we are friends: let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels . . . strike up, pipers" (lines 112-122).

VIII. THE CHARACTERS

HERO AND CLAUDIO

The characters of Hero and Claudio, though reasonably engaging in their simplicity and uprightness, offer no very salient points and are indeed nowise extraordinary. It cannot quite be said that one sees no more in them than "in the ordinary of nature's sale-work" (*As You Like It*, III, v, 42-43); they derive their interest mainly from the events that befall them, the reverse of which is generally true in Shakespeare's delineations. Perhaps we may justly say that, had the course of love run smooth with them, its voice, even if audible, had been hardly worth the hearing.

Hero is indeed kind, amiable, and discreet in her behavior and temper; she has just that air, nay, rather just that soul of bland and modest quietness which makes the unobtrusive but enduring charm of home, and this fitly marks her out as the center of silent or unemphatic interest in her father's household. She is always thoughtful, never voluble, and when she speaks there is no sting or sharpness in her tongue; she is even proud of her brilliant cousin, yet not at all emulous of her brilliancy, keenly relishes her popping and sometimes caustic wit, but covets no such gift for herself, and even shrinks from the laughing attention it wins. As

Hero is altogether gentle and womanly in her ways, so she offers a sweet and inviting nestling-place for the fireside affections. The soft down of her disposition makes an admirable contrast to the bristling and emphatic yet genuine plumage of Beatrice, and there is something very pathetic and touching in her situation when she is stricken down in mute agony by the tongue of slander, while the "blushing apparitions" in her face and the lightning in her eyes tell us that her stillness of tongue proceeds from anything but weakness of nature or want of spirit. Her well-governed intelligence is aptly displayed in the part she bears in the stratagem for taming Beatrice to the gentler pace of love, and in the considerate forbearance which abstains from teasing words after the stratagem has done its work.

Claudio is both a lighter-timbered and a looser-built vessel than Hero; rather credulous, unstable, inconstant, and very much the sport of slight and trivial occasions. A very small matter suffices to upset him, though he is apt enough to be set right again. All this, no doubt, is partly due to his youth and inexperience; but, in truth, his character is mainly that of a brave and clever upstart, somewhat intoxicated with sudden success and not a little puffed with vanity of the Prince's favor. Notwithstanding John's ingrained, habitual, and well-known malice, he is ready to go it blind whenever John sees fit to try his art upon him; and even after he has been duped into one strain of petulant folly by his trick and has found out the falsehood of it, he is still just as open to a second and worse duping. All this may indeed pass as indicating no more in his case than the levity of a rather pampered and over-sensitive self-love. In his unreflective and headlong techiness he fires up at the least hint that seems

to touch his honor, without pausing or deigning to observe the plainest conditions of a fair and prudent judgment.

But, after all the allowance that can be made on this score, it is still no little impeachment of his temper or his understanding, that he should lend his ear to the poisonous breathings of one whose spirits are so well known to "toil in frame of villainies" (IV, i, 184). As to his rash scheme of revenge for Hero's imputed sin, his best excuse therein is that the light-minded Prince, who is indeed such another, goes along with him, while it is somewhat doubtful whether the patron or the favorite is more at fault in thus suffering artful malice to delude him. Claudio's finical and foppish attention to dress, so amusingly ridiculed by Benedick, is a well-conceived trait of his character, as it naturally hints that his quest of the lady grows more from his seeing the advantage of the match than from any deep heart-interest in her person. And his being sprung into such an unreasonable fit of jealousy towards the Prince at the masquerade is another good instance of the dramatist's skill and care in small matters. It makes an apt preparation for the far more serious blunder upon which the main part of the action turns. A piece of conduct which the circumstances do not explain is at once explained by thus disclosing a certain irritable levity in the subject. On much the same ground we can also account very well for his sudden running into a match which, at the best, looks more like a freak of fancy than a resolution of love, while the same suddenness on the side of the more calm, discreet, and patient Hero is accounted for by the strong solicitation of the Prince and the prompt concurrence of her father. But even if Claudio's faults and blunders were greater than they are, his behavior at the

last were enough to prove a real and sound basis of man-
hood in him. The taking-down of his vanity and self-love by the exposure of the poor cheats which had so easily caught him, brings out the true staple of his character. When he is made to feel that on himself alone fall the blame and the guilt which he had been so eager to revenge on others, then his sense of honor acts in a right noble style, prompting him to avenge sternly on himself the wrong and the injury he has done to the gentle Hero and her kindred.

DON JOHN

Critics have unnecessarily found fault with Shakespeare for the character of John, as if it lay without the proper circumference of truth and nature. They would prefer, apparently, the more commonplace character of a disappointed rival in love, whose guilt might be explained away into a pressure of violent motives. But Shakespeare saw deeper into human nature. And perhaps his wisest departure from the old story is in making John a morose, sullen, ill-conditioned rascal, whose innate malice renders the joy of others a pain, and the pain of others a joy, to him. The wanton and unprovoked doing of mischief is the natural luxury and pastime of such envious spirits as he is. To be sure, he assigns as his reason for plotting to blast Claudio's happiness, that the "young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow" (I, iii, 59-60); but then he also adds, "If I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way," which shows his true motive-spring to be a kind of envy-sickness. For this cause, anything that will serve as a platform "to build mischief on" is grateful to him. He thus exemplifies in a small figure the same spon-
taneous malice which towers to such a stupendous height of

wickedness in Iago. We may well shrink from believing in the reality of such characters, but unhappily human life discovers too many plots and doings that cannot be otherwise accounted for, nor need we go far to learn that men may "spin motives out of their own bowels." In pursuance of this idea, Shakespeare takes care to let us know that, in John's account, having his sour and spiteful temper tied up under a pledge of fair and kindly behavior is to be "trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchis'd with a clog" (I, iii, 30-31); that is, he thinks himself robbed of freedom when he is not allowed to bite.

DOGBERRY AND VERGES

Ulrici,¹ regarding the play as setting forth the contrast between life as it is in itself and as it seems to those engaged in its struggles, looks upon Dogberry as embodying the whole idea of the piece. Without question the impressive insignificance of this man's action to the lookers-on is only equaled by its stuffed importance to himself; when he is really most absurd and ridiculous, then it is precisely that he feels most confident and grand — the irony that is rarefied into wit and poetry in others being thus condensed into broad humor and drollery in him. The German critic is not quite right in thinking that Dogberry's blundering garrulity brings to light the infernal plot; it rather operates to keep that plot in the dark. The constable is too fond of hearing himself talk to make known what he has to say in time to prevent the evil, and amidst his tumblings of conceit the truth leaks out at last rather in spite of him than in consequence of anything he does. Dogberry and "neighbour Verges" are

¹ *Shakespeares dramatische Kunst*, Leipzig, 1839.

caricatures, but such as Shakespeare alone of English writers has had a heart to conceive and a hand to delineate, though perhaps Sir Walter Scott comes near enough to him in that line to be named in the same sentence. And how bland, how benignant, how genial, how human-hearted, these caricatures are ! as if their creator felt the persons, with all their grotesque oddities, to be his own veritable flesh-and-blood kindred. There is no contempt, no mockery here ; nothing that ministers an atom of food to any unbenevolent emotion. The subjects are made delicious as well as laughable, and delicious withal through the best and kindest feelings of our nature. Shakespeare's sporting with them is the free, loving, whole-hearted play of a truly great, generous, simple, childlike soul.

BENEDICK AND BEATRICE

In characterization Benedick and Beátrice are the most effective figures of the play. They have been justly ranked among the stronger and deeper of Shakespeare's minor characters. They are just about the right staple for the higher order of comic delineation, whereas several of the leading persons in other comedies draw decidedly into the region of the tragic. The delineation of Benedick and Beatrice stays at all points within the proper sphere of comedy. Both are gifted with a piercing, pungent, and voluble wit, and pride of wit is with both a specially prominent trait ; it appears to be on all ordinary occasions their main, actuating principle. The rare entertainment which others have from their displays in this kind has naturally made them quite conscious of their gift, and this consciousness has not less naturally led them to make it a matter of some pride. They study it and rely on it a good deal as their title or passport to approval and

favor. Hence a habit of flouting and raillery has somewhat usurped the outside of their characters, keeping their better qualities rather in the background, and even obstructing seriously the outcome of what is best in them.

Whether for force of understanding or for solid worth of character, Benedick is vastly superior both to Claudio and to the Prince. He is really a very wise and noble fellow, of a healthy and penetrating intelligence, and with a sound underpinning of earnest and true feeling, as appears when the course of the action surprises or inspires him out of his pride of brilliancy. When a grave occasion comes, his superficial habit of jesting is at once postponed, and the choicer parts of manhood promptly assert themselves in clear and handsome action. We are thus given to know that, however the witty and waggish companion or make-sport may have got the ascendancy in him, he is of an inward composition to forget it as soon as the cause of wronged and suffering virtue or innocence gives him a manly and generous part to perform. And when the blameless and gentle Hero is smitten down with cruel falsehood, and even her father is convinced of her guilt, he is the first to suspect that "the practice of it lives in John the bastard" (IV, i, 183). With his just faith in the honor of the Prince and of Claudio, his quick judgment and native sagacity forthwith hit upon the right clew to the mystery. Much the same, all through, is to be said of Beatrice, who approves herself a thoroughly brave and generous character. The swiftness and brilliancy of wit upon which she so much prides herself are at once forgotten in resentment and vindication of her injured kinswoman. She becomes somewhat furious indeed, but it is a noble and righteous fury — the fury of kindled strength.

As pride of wit bears a main part in shaping the ordinary conduct of these persons, so the dramatist aptly represents them as being specially piqued at what pinches or touches them in that point. Thus in their wit-skirmish at the masquerade, what sticks most in Benedick is being described as "the Prince's jester," and hearing it said that, if his jests are "not mark'd, or not laugh'd at," it "strikes him into melancholy" (II, i, 134); while, on the other side, Beatrice is equally stung at being told that she had her "good wit out of the Hundred Merry Tales" (II, i, 117). Their keen sensitiveness to whatever implies any depreciation or contempt of their faculty in this kind is exceedingly well conceived. It shows that jesting, after all, is more a matter of art with them than of character.

As might be expected, the good repute of Benedick and Beatrice has been not a little periled, not to say damaged, by their redundancy of wit; but it is the ordinary lot of persons so witty as they to suffer under the misconstructions of prejudice or partial acquaintance. Their very sparkling seems to augment the difficulty of coming to a true knowledge of them. It is plain that in the unamiable passages of their deportment both are playing a part, and their playing is rather to conceal than to disclose their real feelings. It is the very strength of their feelings which puts them upon this mode of disguise; and the pointing of their raillery so much against each other is itself proof of a deep and growing mutual interest, though it must be confessed that the ability to play so well, and in that kind, is a great temptation to carry it to excess or to use it where it may cause something else than mirth. This it is that justifies the repetition of the stratagem for drawing on a match between them, the same

process being needed in both cases that they may get rid of their reciprocal disguises and become straightforward and in earnest. And so the effect of the stratagem is to begin the unmasking which is so thoroughly completed by the wrongs and sufferings of Hero; they are thus disciplined out of their playing and made to show themselves as they are. Their peculiar cast of self-love and their pride of wit are adroitly worked upon in the execution of the scheme for bringing them together. Both are deeply mortified at overhearing how they are blamed for their addiction to flouting, and at the same time both are highly flattered in being made each to believe that the other is secretly dying of love. As they are both professed heretics on the score of love and marriage, so they are both tamed out of their heresy in the glad persuasion that they have each proved too much for the other's pride of wit, and have each converted the other to the true faith. But, indeed, that heresy was all along feigned as a refuge from merry persecutions, and the virtue of the thing is, that in the belief that they have each conquered the other's assumed fastidiousness, they each lay aside their own. The case involves a highly curious interplay of various motives on either side, and it is not easy to say whether vanity or generosity, the self-regarding or the self-forgetting emotions, are uppermost in the process.

WIT OF BENEDICK AND BEATRICE

The wit of Benedick and Beatrice, though seeming at first view much the same, is very nicely discriminated. Beatrice, intelligent as she is, has little of reflection in her wit, but throws it off in rapid flashes whenever any object ministers a spark to her fancy. Though of the most piercing keenness

and the most exquisite aptness, there is no ill-nature about it; it stings indeed, but does not poison. The offspring merely of the moment and the occasion, it catches the apprehension, but quickly slides from the memory. Its agility is infinite. The wit of Benedick, on the other hand, springs more from reflection and grows with the growth of thought. With all the pungency, and nearly all the pleasantry, of Beatrice's, it has less of spontaneous volubility. Hence in their skirmishes she always gets the better of him, hitting him so swiftly and in so many places, as to bewilder his aim. But he makes ample amends when out of her presence; then he trundles off jests in whole paragraphs. In short, if his wit be slower, it is also stronger than hers; not so agile of movement but more weighty in matter, it shines less but burns more; and as it springs much less out of the occasion, so it bears repeating much better. The effect of the serious events in bringing these persons to an armistice of wit is a happy stroke of art, and perhaps some such thing was necessary to prevent the impression of their being jesters by trade. It proves, at least, that Beatrice is a witty woman and not a mere female wit.

IX. STAGE HISTORY

Much Ado About Nothing has all the qualities of a good acting play. Its excellencies of plot and character are obvious. The points and situations are so shaped and ordered, and the interest is of such varied appeal, ranging from broad comedy and sparkling dialogue to pathos and tragedy, that, even when indifferently acted, it has always been effective on the stage.

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The popularity of the comedy from the first as an acting play is indicated by the title-page of the Quarto (reproduced in facsimile as the frontispiece of this volume), where the statement is made, "as it hath been sundrie times publicly acted." Both the Quarto and the Folios (see note, IV, ii, 1, *Enter DOGBERRY . . .*) preserve the names of Kemp¹ and Cowley, two of the original cast, who seem to have taken the parts of Dogberry and Verges. It is evident from various allusions in contemporary literature that public appreciation fastened chiefly on the scenes in which Dogberry appears. Robert Armin, in his tract *The Italian Taylor, and his Boy* (1609), speaks of himself as having been "writ downe for an Asse in his time"; and plays like Middleton's *Blurt, Master-Constable* (1602), Marston's *The Dutch Courtezan* (1605), Heywood's *The Fayre Mayde of the Exchange* (1607), Fletcher's *The Knight of Malta* (1619?), and Glapthorne's *Wit in a Constable* (1639) abound in reminiscences of the more popular passages. As mentioned above (Sources, The Story of Benedick and Beatrice), the play was acted at Court in 1613, and Leonard Digges,² in his verses "Upon Master William Shakespeare," prefixed to the edition of Shakespeare's *Poems* published in 1640, says:

¹ William Kemp (Kempe) was the most famous low comedian of his day. He was the successor of the great clown and jester, Richard Tarlton. In *Romeo and Juliet*, IV, iv, 101, for 'Enter Peter' the Second Quarto has 'Enter Will Kemp.' See Collier, *Memoirs of Actors in the Plays of Shakespeare*, 1846.

² Leonard Digges also wrote verses "To the Memorie of the deceased Authour Maister W. Shakespeare," prefixed to the First Folio.

let but *Beatrice*
 And *Benedicke* be seene, loe in a trice
 The Cockpit, Galleries, Boxes, all are full.¹

Much Ado About Nothing was one of the Shakespeare plays that suffered at the hands of adapters when the theatres were reopened at the Restoration. D'Avenant took the passages in which Benedick and Beatrice appear, and with grotesque additions and excisions foisted them into a play called *The Law against Lovers*, founded upon *Measure for Measure*. This extraordinary jumble of two Shakespeare comedies was seen by Pepys in February, 1661-1662, who notes in his *Diary* that it is a "good play and well performed."

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Four revivals² of *Much Ado About Nothing* took place in the eighteenth century, before 1748. In that year Garrick appeared for the first time as Benedick, the part of Beatrice being taken by the famous actress Mrs. Pritchard. Davies records that her acting was in no way inferior to Garrick's: "Every scene between them was a continual struggle for superiority; nor could the spectators determine which was

¹ An interesting reference to the play, though not concerned with its popularity on the stage, is found in the third edition (1640) of Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy*: "And many times those which at the first sight cannot fancy or affect each other, but are harsh and ready to disagree, offended with each other's carriage, like *Benedict* and *Betteris* in the Comedy & in whom they finde many faults . . . begin at last to dote insensibly one upon another."

² Exclusive of an odd version of the play produced with some success at Drury Lane in 1737, under the name of *The Universal Passion*, in which were interpolated passages from Molière's *Princesse d'Élide*.

the victor." Garrick made a characteristic hit when he selected the part of Benedick in which to reappear on the stage after his much-talked-of marriage in 1749, and from that time to the end of his career as actor-manager in 1776, Benedick was his favorite Shakespearian rôle. After Garrick's retirement, Henderson, whose acting in Shakespearian parts at Bath won him the sobriquet of Bath Roscius, appeared as Benedick at Drury Lane, and his success became the talk of the town. Mrs. Abington, one of the famous actresses who played Beatrice to Henderson's Benedick, took the part with distinction for upwards of twenty-five years. It is interesting to note that it was an interpretation of Beatrice by Mrs. Siddons at Bath which won the attention of Henderson and led to the great tragedienne's fateful London engagement of 1782.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The first interpreter of Benedick to win distinction in the nineteenth century was Charles Kemble, who played the part in 1831 to the Beatrice of his daughter, the well-known Fanny Kemble. On the night Kemble bade adieu to the stage he played Benedick to the Beatrice of a young girl, Helen (Helena) Faucit, who was singled out by him for this special performance and appeared in the part for the first time. Miss Faucit (Lady Theodore Martin) became one of the noteworthy Beatrices in the history of the stage, and her study of the character, given in the form of a letter to Ruskin, is a distinct addition to the literature of Shakespearian interpretation.¹ Miss Faucit appeared in Macready's revivals of

¹ Given in *On Some of Shakespeare's Female Characters*, Blackwood and Sons, 1885.

Much Ado About Nothing, which are also memorable for historical accuracy and elaborateness in the accessories of scenery and costume. Distinguished among the later revivals of the play is that associated with Charles Kean's farewell season in 1858, when he took the part of Benedick and Mrs. Kean (Ellen Tree) that of Beatrice; but perhaps the most noteworthy in the history of the modern stage is the production at the Lyceum in 1883, under the management of Henry Irving, with Miss Ellen Terry as Beatrice. An interesting feature of these nineteenth century revivals, and one which links them to the Elizabethan performances, is the attention given to Dogberry and Verges. Characteristically enough, the eighteenth century minimized the importance of the broad comedy scenes; the nineteenth witnessed a succession of notable interpreters of blundering Bumbledom in Munden, Suett, Yates, Meadows, and Frank Matthews.

AUTHORITIES

(With the more important abbreviations used in the notes)

- Q = Quarto, 1600.
 F₁ = First Folio, 1623.
 F₂ = Second Folio, 1632.
 F₃ = Third Folio, 1663, 1664.
 F₄ = Fourth Folio, 1685.
 Ff = all the seventeenth century Folios.
 Rowe = Rowe's editions, 1709, 1714.
 Pope = Pope's editions, 1723, 1728.
 Theobald = Theobald's editions, 1733, 1740.
 Hanmer = Hanmer's edition, 1744.
 Johnson = Johnson's edition, 1765.
 Capell = Capell's edition, 1768.
 Malone = Malone's edition, 1790.
 Steevens = Steevens's edition, 1793.
 Knight = C. Knight's edition, 1840.
 Collier = J. P. Collier's (second) edition, 1858.
 Globe = Globe edition (Clark and Wright), 1864.
 Dyce = Dyce's (third) edition, 1875.
 Delius = Delius's (fifth) edition, 1882.
 Marshall = F. A. Marshall's *Henry Irving* edition, 1890.
 Camb = Cambridge (third) edition (W. A. Wright), 1891.
 Furness = H. H. Furness's *A New Variorum, Much Ado About Nothing*, 1899.
 Herford = C. H. Herford's *The Eversley Shakespeare*, 1903.
 Tyrwhitt = T. Tyrwhitt's *Observations and Conjectures*, etc., 1766.
 Abbott = E. A. Abbott's *A Shakespearian Grammar*.
 Fleay = F. G. Fleay's *Introduction to Shakespearian Study*.
 Furnivall = F. J. Furnivall's *Introduction to The Leopold Shakespeare*.
 Cotgrave = Cotgrave's *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*, 1611.
 Schmidt = Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*.
 Skeat = Skeat's *An Etymological Dictionary*.
 Murray = *A New English Dictionary (The Oxford Dictionary)*.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART

Except in the case of Shakespeare's plays (see note) the literature dates refer to first publication

YEAR	SHAKESPEARE		HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY
	BIOGRAPHY; POEMS	PLAYS	
1564	Birth. Baptism, April 26, Stratford-on-Avon	<p>NOTE. The plays in the columns below are arranged in the probable, though purely conjectural, order of composition. Dates appended to plays are those of first publication. Where no date is given, the play was first published in the First Folio (1623). M signifies that the play was mentioned by Meres in the Falladis Tamia (1598)</p>	<p>BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE</p> <p>Quart livre de Pantagruel</p>
1565	Father became alderman		<p>Michelangelo died. Calvin died. Marlowe born. Galileo born</p>
1566	Brother Gilbert born		<p>Philip II of Spain gave his name to Philippine Islands</p>
1568	Father, as bailiff of Stratford, entertained Queen's and Earl of Worcester's actors		<p>Murder of Rizzio</p>
1572			<p>Mary of Scots a prisoner in England. Ascham died. Coverdale died. Netherlands War of Liberation</p>
1573			<p>Knox died. Massacre of St. Bartholomew</p>
1574	Brother Richard born		<p>Ben Jonson born? Donne born</p>
1575			<p>Earl of Leicester's players licensed</p>
			<p>Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth. Palissy lectured on Natural History</p>
1576			<p>"The Theatre" opened in Finsbury Fields, London, followed by "The Curtain." Hans Sachs died</p>
1577	Father in financial difficulties		<p>Drake sailed to circumnavigate globe</p>

1579	Sister Ann died (aged eight)	Gosson's School of Abuse. North's Plutarch. Lyly's Euphuës (pt. 1). Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar	Union of Utrecht. Tasso put in confinement at Ferrara
1580	Brother Edmund born	Montaigne's Essais (first edition)	Brown founded Separatists. Camoens died
1581		Tasso's Gerusalemme Liberata	Dutch Declaration of Independence
1582	Married Anne Hathaway	The Rheims New Testament	Accademia della Crusca founded
1583	Daughter Susanna born	Garnier's Les Juives	Sir Humphrey Gilbert drowned
1584		Lyly's Campaspe. Peele's Arraignment of Paris	William the Silent assassinated. Ivan the Terrible died
1585	Twin children (Hamnet, Judith) born	Guarini's Pastor Fido (1590)	Ronsard died
1586	Probably went to London	Camden's Britannia	Sir Philip Sidney killed
1587		Hakluyt's Four Voyages. Faustbuch (Spiess, Frankfurt)	Execution of Mary of Scots
1588		Martin Marprelate: The Epistle	Defeat of Spanish Armada
1589		Puttenham's Art of English Poesie	Henry of Navarre, King of France. Palissy died in Bastille
1590		Marlowe's Tamburlaine. Spenser's Faerie Queene, I-III. Lodge's Rosalynde. Sidney's Arcadia	Battle of Ivry
1591		Sidney's Astrophel and Stella. Harington's tr. of Orlando Furioso	Herrick born

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART (CONTINUED)

YEAR	SHAKESPEARE		BRITISH AND FOREIGN LITERATURE	HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY
	BIOGRAPHY: POEMS	PLAYS (see note above)		
1592	Greene's attack in Groatworth of Wit	Richard III (M, 1597). 3 Henry VI	Daniel's Delia. Lyly's Gallathea (Galatea)	Greene died. Montaigne died. London theatres closed through plague
1593	Venus and Adonis (seven editions, 1593-1602)	King John (M). Richard II (M, 1597)	Peele's Edward I. Barnes's Sonnets	Marlowe died. Herbert born
1594	Lucrece (five editions, 1594-1616)		Rinuccini's Dafne. Satiire Menipee	Palestrina ("Princeps Musicæ") died
1595	Valuable contemporary references to Shakespeare	All's Well that Ends Well. Taming of the Shrew	Peele's Old Wives' Tale. Spenser's Epithalamion	Tasso died. Sir Walter Raleigh's expedition to Guiana. Sir J. Hawkins died
1596	Son Hamnet died. Famously applied for coat-of-arms	1 Henry IV (M, 1598). 2 Henry IV (1600)	Drayton's Mortimeriad. Faerie Queene, Books IV-VI	Burbage built Blackfriars' Theatre. Descartes born. Sir F. Drake died
1597	Purchased New Place, Stratford	Merry Wives of Windsor. Merchant of Venice (M, 1600)	Bacon's Essays (first edition). Hall's Virginiemiarum	The Tyrone rebellion
1598	Shakespeare acted in Jonson's Every Man in His Humour	Much Ado About Nothing (1600)	Meres's Palladis Tamia. Chapman's Homer (pt. 1). Lope de Vega's Arcadia	Peele died. Edict of Nantes
1599	Part proprietor of Globe Theatre. Coat-of-arms granted. The Passionate Pilgrim	As You Like It	Aleman's Guzman de Alfarache. Peele's David and Bethsabe	Spenser died. Globe Theatre built. Oliver Cromwell born
1600	Won a London lawsuit	Twelfth Night	England's Helicon	Calderon born. Bruno died

1601	Father died. The Phoenix and Turtle			Julius Cæsar	Jonson's Poetaster	The Essex plot. Rivalry between London adult and boy actors
1602	Purchased more Stratford real estate			Hamlet (1603)	Dekker's Satiromastix	Bodleian Library founded
1603	His company acted before the Queen	Troilus and Cressida (1609)		Othello	Jonson's Sejanus	Queen Elizabeth died. Millenary Petition
1604	Sued Rogers at Stratford	Measure for Measure		Macbeth	Marlowe's Faustus (1588-1589)	Hampton Court Conference
1605	Godfather to William D'Avenant			King Lear (1608)	Don Quixote (pt. 1)	Gunpowder plot. Sir Thomas Browne born
1606	King Lear given before Court			Timon of Athens	Chapman's Monsieur D'Olive	Lyly died. Corneille born
1607	Daughter Susanna married Dr. Hall			Antony and Cleopatra	Dekker and Webster's Westward Ho!	Settlement of Jamestown
1608	Birth of granddaughter, Elizabeth Hall. Death of mother (Mary Arden)	Pericles (1609)		Coriolanus	Captain John Smith's A True Relation . Middleton's A Mad World	Milton born. Quebec founded
1609	Sonnets. A Lover's Complaint				The Douai Old Testament	Separatists (Pilgrims) in Leyden
1610	Purchased more real estate	Cymbeline			Strachey's Wracke and Redemption	Henry IV (Navarre) assassinated
1611	Subscribed for better highways	Winter's Tale The Tempest			King James Bible (A.V.). Bellarmine's Puissance du Pape	Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden
1613	Invested in London house property. Brother Richard died	Henry VIII			Drayton's Polyolbion	Globe Theatre burned
1616	Made his will. Daughter Judith married Thomas Quiney. Died April 23 (May 3, New Style)				Captain John Smith's New England . Folio edition of Jonson's Poems. D'Aubigné's Les Tragiques (1577)	Cervantes died. Beaumont died. Baffin explores Baffin's Bay. Harvey lectured on the circulation of the blood

DISTRIBUTION OF CHARACTERS

In this analysis are shown the acts and scenes in which the characters (see *Dramatis Personæ*, page 2) appear, with the number of speeches and lines given to each.

NOTE. Parts of lines are counted as whole lines.

		NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES			NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES
DON PEDRO	I, i	21	63	LEONATO	I, i	15	33
	II, i	28	62		I, ii	4	11
	II, iii	25	61		II, i	17	37
	III, ii	22	45		II, iii	16	42
	IV, i	3	11		III, ii	3	4
	V, i	29	63		III, v	11	13
	V, iii	2	7		IV, i	19	68
	V, iv	4	6		V, i	25	108
		134	318		V, iv	11	25
DON JOHN						121	341
	I, i	1	2	ANTONIO	I, ii	3	12
	I, iii	11	38		II, i	6	7
	II, i	5	9		V, i	11	32
	II, ii	9	18		V, iv	3	3
	III, ii	12	33			23	54
	IV, i	3	8				
CLAUDIO		41	108	BALTHASAR	II, i	5	6
	I, i	19	39		II, iii	6	23
	II, i	14	28			11	29
	II, iii	18	33	CONRADE	I, iii	6	14
	III, ii	18	31		III, iii	12	17
	IV, i	14	54		IV, ii	5	6
	V, i	28	54			23	37
	V, iii	5	15	BORACHIO	I, iii	6	14
	V, iv	8	21		II, i	2	4
		124	275		II, ii	8	33
BENEDICK					III, iii	14	43
	I, i	26	88		IV, ii	4	4
	II, i	20	74		V, i	5	20
	II, iii	11	74			39	118
	III, ii	5	9				
	IV, i	30	50				
	V, i	8	22				
	V, ii	16	58				
	V, iv	18	43				
		134	418				

		NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES			NO. OF SPEECHES	NO. OF LINES
FRIAR FRANCIS	IV, i V, iv	12 4 16	75 9 84	MARGARET	II, i III, i III, iv V, ii	4 1 16 5 26	6 1 51 10 68
DOGBERRY	III, iii III, v IV, ii V, i	17 12 16 7 52	60 36 44 30 170	URSULA	II, i III, i III, iv V, ii	4 11 3 1 19	9 29 5 5 48
VERGES	III, iii III, v IV, ii V, i	8 5 4 1 18	13 8 5 2 28	MESSENGER	I, i III, v V, iv	15 1 1 17	29 2 2 33
SEXTON	IV, ii	7	14				
BOY	II, iii	2	2	1 WATCH	III, iii IV, ii	4 2 6	7 5 12
HERO	I, i II, i III, i III, iv IV, i IV, iv	1 6 13 12 9 3 44	1 10 78 17 18 8 132	2 WATCH	III, iii IV, ii	10 2 12	16 3 19
BEATRICE	I, i II, i II, iii III, i III, iv IV, i V, ii V, iv	17 30 3 1 11 27 10 7 106	53 102 8 10 17 53 20 10 273	WATCH	III, iii	3	5
				A LORD	V, iii	1	1
				SONG	V, iii	1	10



THE COMEDY OF
MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ¹

DON PEDRO,² prince of Arragon
 DON JOHN, bastard brother to Don Pedro
 CLAUDIO, a young lord of Florence
 BENEDICK,³ a young lord of Padua
 LEONATO,⁴ governor of Messina
 ANTONIO, brother to Leonato
 BALTHASAR,⁵ attendant on Don Pedro
 CONRADE, } followers of Don John
 BORACHIO,⁶ }
 FRIAR FRANCIS
 DOGBERRY,⁷ a constable
 VERGES,⁷ a headborough
 Sexton
 Boy

 HERO, daughter to Leonato
 BEATRICE,⁸ nièce to Leonato
 MARGARET, } gentlewomen attending on Hero
 URSULA, }

 Messengers, Watch, Attendants, etc.

SCENE: *Messina*

¹ DRAMATIS PERSONÆ. Rowe was the first to give a list of the characters. He and Pope included 'Innogen, wife to Leonato.' See note, I, i, 1, *Enter LEONATO* . . . Some editors add Hugh Oat-cake, George Sea-coal, and Francis Sea-coal. See III, iii, 11; III, v, 52-53.

² DON PEDRO. Bandello, in his *novella*, gives the name as 'Re Piero' (King Piero). See Introduction, Sources.

³ BENEDICK. From Latin *benedictus*, 'he who is blessed.'

⁴ LEONATO. Bandello has 'Lionato.' See Introduction, Sources.

⁵ BALTHASAR. Pronounced bal'tha-sar. So in *The Merchant of Venice* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

⁶ BORACHIO. Pronounced bo-ratch'yo. From Spanish *borracho*, 'drunk.'

⁷ See note, III, iii, 1, *Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES*. The descriptive term 'headborough,' meaning a parish officer, is taken from the original stage direction, III, v, 1. See textual variants.

⁸ BEATRICE. From Latin *beatrix*, 'she who blesses.' There is evidence that the Elizabethan pronunciation of 'Beatrice' was bet'ris or bet'er-is.

ACT I

SCENE I. *Before LEONATO's house*

Enter LEONATO, HERO, and BEATRICE, *with a Messenger*

LEONATO. I learn in this letter that Don Pedro of Aragon comes this night to Messina.

MESSENGER. He is very near by this: he was not three leagues off when I left him.

LEONATO. How many gentlemen have you lost in this action? 6

MESSENGER. But few of any sort, and none of name.

ACT I. SCENE I | Actus Primus.
Scena prima Ff | Q omits. — *Before*
LEONATO'S house Capell | QFf omit.

1. *Enter* LEONATO . . . (see note below).

1, 9. Pedro Rowe | Peter QFf.

For the dramatic construction and analysis of scenes, and the characters, see Introduction.

1. *Enter* LEONATO . . . In both the Quarto and the Folios the stage direction is, "Enter Leonato Governour of Messina, Innogen his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece with a messenger," and at the beginning of Act II, Scene i, occurs "Enter Leonato, his brother, his wife," etc. Innogen does not appear in the play. Either Shakespeare intended to use the character, or it is a trace of an earlier play. As a rule, Shakespeare's heroines are motherless.

1, 9. Pedro. It is possible that in the 'Peter' of the Quarto and Folios may be another trace of an earlier play.

5-6. **this action.** Probably the suppression of Don John's rebellion.

7. **sort.** Either 'kind' or 'rank.' If the messenger is answering the question directly, the word means 'rank.' Leonato apparently understands him to mean 'We have lost few men of any kind,' etc. Cf. line 31.

LEONATO. A victory is twice itself when the achiever brings home full numbers: I find here that Don Pedro hath bestowed much honour on a young Florentine, called Claudio. 11

MESSENGER. Much deserv'd on his part, and equally rememb'ed by Don Pedro: he hath borne himself beyond the promise of his age, doing in the figure of a lamb the feats of a lion: he hath indeed better bett'ed expectation than you must expect of me to tell you how. 16

LEONATO. He hath an uncle here in Messina will be very much glad of it.

MESSENGER. I have already delivered him letters, and there appears much joy in him, even so much that joy could not show itself modest enough without a badge of bitterness. 22

LEONATO. Did he break out into tears?

MESSENGER. In great measure.

LEONATO. A kind overflow of kindness: there are

13. rememb'ed: mentioned. Cf. *The Tempest*, I, ii, 404: "The ditty does remember my drown'd father."

15. bett'ed: surpassed. Cf. *The Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 136.

17. uncle . . . will: uncle who will. The apparent omission of the relative is common in Shakespeare. See Abbott, § 244.

21-22. badge of bitterness: livery of sorrow. A touch of euphuism. With lines 20-25 compare *Macbeth*, I, iv, 33-35:

My plenteous joys,
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow.

25. kind: natural. The original meaning. — kindness: tenderness. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, II, i, 40-43: "my bosom is full of kindness, and I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that upon the least occasion more mine eyes will tell tales of me." There is a play on words in 'kind' and 'kindness.'

no faces truer than those that are so wash'd. How much better is it to weep at joy than to joy at weeping! 27

BEATRICE. I pray you, is Signior Mountanto return'd from the wars, or no?

MESSENGER. I know none of that name, lady: there was none such in the army of any sort.

LEONATO. What is he that you ask for, niece?

HERO. My cousin means Signior Benedick of Padua.

MESSENGER. O, he's return'd, and as pleasant as ever he was. 35

BEATRICE. He set up his bills here in Messina, and challeng'd Cupid at the flight; and my uncle's fool, reading the challenge, subscrib'd for Cupid, and challeng'd him at the bird-bolt. I pray you, how many hath he kill'd and eaten in these wars? But how many hath he kill'd? for indeed I promis'd to eat all of his killing. 41

28. *Mountanto* QFf Camb Globe |
Montanto Pope Johnson Delius.

39. *bird-bolt* Pope Theobald | Bur-
bolt QFf Rowe.

28. *Mountanto*. The name is borrowed from an old term of the Italian fencing school, and means 'upward thrust.' It is used here humorously or sarcastically in the sense of 'bravado.'

31. *sort*: rank. Cf. line 7, and see note. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, I, i, 62.

34. *pleasant*: amusing, ridiculous. Cf. *The Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 190.

36. *set up his bills*: posted a challenge.

37. *at the flight*: at long-distance shooting. The flight, or flight-arrow, was a light, well-feathered arrow.

38-39. *at the bird-bolt*: at short-distance shooting. The bird-bolt was a blunt-headed arrow that brought down birds without destroying the plumage, and fools were allowed to use it. Cf. the proverb, "A fool's bolt is soon shot." Cupid's arrow was often called a bird-bolt. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV, iii, 25.

41. Cf. *Henry V*, III, vii, 99-100: "RAMBURES. He longs to eat the English. CONSTABLE. I think he will eat all he kills."

LEONATO. 'Faith, niece, you tax Signior Benedick too much, but he'll be meet with you, I doubt it not.

MESSENGER. He hath done good service, lady, in these wars. 45

BEATRICE. You had musty victual, and he hath help to eat it: he's a very valiant trencher-man, he hath an excellent stomach.

MESSENGER. And a good soldier too, lady.

BEATRICE. And a good soldier to a lady. But what is he to a lord? 51

MESSENGER. A lord to a lord, a man to a man, stuff'd with all honourable virtues.

BEATRICE. It is so, indeed; he is no less than a stuff'd man: but for the stuffing, well, we are all mortal. 55

LEONATO. You must not, sir, mistake my niece. There is a kind of merry war betwixt Signior Benedick and her: they never meet but there's a skirmish of wit between them.

BEATRICE. Alas! he gets nothing by that. In our last conflict four of his five wits went halting off, and now is

44. these QF₁ | those F₂F₃F₄.

47. eat F₃F₄ | eate QF₂ | ease F₁.

43. meet with you: even with you, quits with you. The original meaning of 'meet' is 'commensurate.'

48. stomach. A play on the word. Cf. *Henry V*, III, vii, 165-166: "they have only stomachs to eat and none to fight."

52-53. stuff'd . . . virtues. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 183.

55. stuffing, well. Theobald's punctuation, "stuffing,—well," is accepted by most editors. The Quarto and Folios have "stuffing well," which suggests a play on words lost by the introduction of the dash.

60. The 'wits,' five in number to match the five 'senses' (cf. *Sonnets*, CXLI, 9-10), are, according to Stephen Hawes (in *The Pastime of Pleasure*, xxiv, 2), common wit, imagination, fantasy, estimation, and memory.

the whole man govern'd with one: so that if he have wit enough to keep himself warm, let him bear it for a difference between himself and his horse: for it is all the wealth that he hath left, to be known a reasonable creature. Who is his companion now? he hath every month a new sworn brother. * 66

MESSENGER. Is 't possible?

BEATRICE. Very easily possible: he wears his faith but as the fashion of his hat; it ever changes with the next block. 70

MESSENGER. I see, lady, the gentleman is not in your books.

BEATRICE. No; and he were, I would burn my study. But I pray you, who is his companion? Is there no young

73. and he QFf | an he Theobald | if he Pope.

62-63. bear it for a difference: wear it as a distinguishing mark. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, v, 183, "wear your rue with a difference."

65-66. sworn brother. In mediæval chivalry the brothers in arms (*fratres jurati*) vowed to share each other's fortunes.

68. faith: fidelity, constancy. Often so. Cf. II, i, 164.

70. block: mold for shaping a hat. Hence 'fashion' (of hat). Cf. *King Lear*, IV, vi, 187. Dekker, in *Seven Deadly Sinnes of London*, 1606, says, "the blocke for his head alters faster then the feltmaker can fitte him, and thereupon we are called in scorne blockheads."

71-72. The origin of the expression 'in a person's books,' meaning 'in favor with him,' is perhaps the sixteenth century custom of keeping records of friends, or that of servants and retainers being entered in the records of those to whom they were attached. Cf. *1 Henry VI*, II, iv, 101.

73. and: if. So in lines 128, 179, 188; II, iii, 75, 147; III, iii, 77; III, iv, 30, 32, 50; III, v, 35; V, i, 134, 171, 210. When 'and' means 'if,' most modern editors follow Theobald and substitute 'an.' Except in the combination 'an't,' 'an' occurs only once in the First Folio (*Love's Labour's Lost*, V, ii, 232).

squarer now that will make a voyage with him to the devil? 76

MESSENGER. He is most in the company of the right noble Claudio.

BEATRICE. O Lord, he will hang upon him like a disease: he is sooner caught than the pestilence, and the taker runs presently mad. God help the noble Claudio! if he have caught the Benedick, it will cost him a thousand pound ere a be cur'd.

MESSENGER. I will hold friends with you, lady.

BEATRICE. Do, good friend. 85

LEONATO. You will never run mad, niece.

BEATRICE. No, not till a hot January.

MESSENGER. Don Pedro is approach'd.

Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, *and*
BALTHASAR

DON PEDRO. Good Signior Leonato, you are come to meet your trouble: the fashion of the world is to avoid cost, and you encounter it. 91

83. a Q | he F₁ | it F₂F₃F₄. Claudio, Benedicke, Balthasar, and
86. will never Q | 'l ne're Ff. Iohn the bastard QFf.—Scene II
89. *Enter* . . . | *Enter* don Pedro, Pope.—you are Ff | are you Q.

75. squarer: quarrelsome fellow. Cf. 'square,' meaning 'quarrel,' *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i, 30.

81. presently: immediately. So in lines 285, 307; II, ii, 50; III, i, 14; III, iii, 27; IV, i, 246; V, ii, 89; V, iv, 68.

83. a: he. A dialectic form often written 'a or a'. So in II, i, 15; II, iii, 178; III, ii, 37, 45; III, iii, 25, 71, 114, 115, 151; IV, i, 294; V, iv, 99.

84. hold friends: keep on good terms.

88. is approach'd: has come. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, I, i, 4: "His lordship is walk'd forth into the orchard."

LEONATO. Never came trouble to my house in the likeness of your grace: for trouble being gone, comfort should remain; but when you depart from me, sorrow abides, and happiness takes his leave. 95

DON PEDRO. You embrace your charge too willingly. I think this is your daughter.

LEONATO. Her mother hath many times told me so.

BENEDICK. Were you in doubt, sir, that you ask'd her? 99

LEONATO. Signior Benedick, no; for then were you a child.

DON PEDRO. You have it full, Benedick: we may guess by this what you are, being a man: truly, the lady fathers herself. Be happy, lady, for you are like an honourable father. 105

BENEDICK. If Signior Leonato be her father, she would not have his head on her shoulders for all Messina, as like him as she is.

BEATRICE. I wonder that you will still be talking, Signior Benedick: nobody marks you. 110

BENEDICK. What, my dear Lady Disdain! are you yet living?

BEATRICE. Is it possible disdain should die while she hath such meet food to feed it as Signior Benedick?

99. sir Q | Ff omit.

114. it | on (Keightley conj.).

95. his: its. 'Its' was just coming into use in Shakespeare's day.

96. embrace your charge. Literally or figuratively: 'embrace your ward' or 'assume your burden.'

103-104. fathers herself: shows who her father is.

106-108. Benedick apparently means that the youthful Hero would be unwilling to have her father's years at any price.

109. still: continually. So in line 125. Often so.

Courtesy itself must convert to disdain, if you come in her presence. 116

BENEDICK. Then is courtesy a turncoat; but it is certain I am loved of all ladies, only you excepted: and I would I could find in my heart that I had not a hard heart, for truly I love none. 120

BEATRICE. A dear happiness to women: they would else have been troubled with a pernicious suitor. I thank God and my cold blood, I am of your humour for that: I had rather hear my dog bark at a crow than a man swear he loves me.

BENEDICK. God keep your ladyship still in that mind! so some gentleman or other shall scape a predestinate scratch'd face. 127

BEATRICE. Scratching could not make it worse, and 't were such a face as yours were.

BENEDICK. Well, you are a rare parrot-teacher. 130

BEATRICE. A bird of my tongue is better than a beast of yours.

BENEDICK. I would my horse had the speed of your tongue, and so good a continuer: but keep your way a' God's name; I have done. 135

BEATRICE. You always end with a jade's trick: I know you of old.

128. and QFf | an Rowe | if Pope.

132. yours QF₂F₃F₄ | your F₁.

134-135. a' God's | a Gods QFf | i' God's Capell | o' God's Theobald.

115. convert. Intransitive. Cf. *Richard II*, V, i, 66: "The love of wicked men converts to fear."

121. dear happiness: precious piece of good fortune.

126. scape. An aphetic form of 'escape.' Like 'squire' for 'esquire,' 'down' for 'adown.' Cf. 'fore,' IV, ii, 29. — predestinate: predestined. See Abbott, § 342.

136. a jade's trick: a balky horse's trick of slipping its collar.

DON PEDRO. This is the sum of all: Leonato, Signior Claudio, and Signior Benedick, my dear friend Leonato, hath invited you all: I tell him we shall stay here, at the least a month, and he heartily prays some occasion may detain us longer: I dare swear he is no hypocrite, but prays from his heart. 143

LEONATO. If you swear, my lord, you shall not be forsworn. [*To DON JOHN*] Let me bid you welcome, my lord: being reconciled to the prince your brother, I owe you all duty.

DON JOHN. I thank you: I am not of many words, but I thank you.

LEONATO. Please it your grace lead on? 150

DON PEDRO. Your hand, Leonato; we will go together.

[*Exeunt all except BENEDICK and CLAUDIO*]

CLAUDIO. Benedick, didst thou note the daughter of Signior Leonato?

BENEDICK. I noted her not; but I look'd on her.

CLAUDIO. Is she not a modest young lady? 155

BENEDICK. Do you question me as an honest man should

138. This is Ff | That is Qq.

Manent . . . Q | . . . Manet . . . Ff.

145. [*To DON JOHN*] Hanmer.

152. Scene III Pope.

151. [*. . . all except . . . | . . .*]

138-140. The punctuation here is that of the Quarto (1600). It has puzzled editors from the time of the First Folio (1623) to the present, but it is quite correct. 'Leonato' is in the nominative case, the subject of 'hath invited'; 'Signior Claudio' and 'Signior Benedick' are in the vocative; 'my dear friend Leonato' repeats as with a gesture of courtesy the previous 'Leonato.' Most editors punctuate as follows: "all, Leonato. Signior . . ." Collier, who originated this punctuation, subsequently abandoned it.

152. *thou*. Claudio uses 'thou' (the intimate and familiar word) from now to the end of the scene.

do, for my simple true judgment? or would you have me speak after my custom, as being a professed tyrant to their sex?

CLAUDIO. No; I pray thee speak in sober judgment. 160

BENEDICK. Why, i' faith, methinks she's too low for a high praise, too brown for a fair praise, and too little for a great praise, only this commendation I can afford her, that were she other than she is, she were unhandsome, and being no other but as she is, I do not like her. 165

CLAUDIO. Thou think'st I am in sport: I pray thee tell me truly how thou lik'st her.

BENEDICK. Would you buy her, that you inquire after her?

CLAUDIO. Can the world buy such a jewel? 170

BENEDICK. Yea, and a case to put it into, but speak you this with a sad brow? or do you play the flouting Jack, to tell us Cupid is a good hare-finder, and Vulcan a rare carpenter? Come, in what key shall a man take you, to go in the song? 175

CLAUDIO. In mine eye, she is the sweetest lady that ever I look'd on.

BENEDICK. I can see yet without spectacles, and I see

163. *praise*, QFf | *praise*: Globe.

162. *brown*. Fair hair was the fashion in Elizabeth's reign.

163. *only this . . . afford her*: except that I can commend her thus far. The punctuation of the Quarto and Folios, as given here, closely connects 'commendation' and 'praise.'

172. *sad*: serious. So in I, iii, 54; II, i, 314, 315; II, iii, 203 ('sadly'); V, i, 198. — *flouting Jack*: ironical knave. Cf. V, i, 91.

173-174. The idea that the blindly acting Cupid is especially sharp-sighted, and Vulcan, the artificer in metals, a deft carpenter!

174-175. *go in the song*: join you in singing.

no such matter: there's her cousin, and she were not possess'd with a fury, exceeds her as much in beauty as the first of May doth the last of December: but I hope you have no intent to turn husband, have you? 182

CLAUDIO. I would scarce trust myself, though I had sworn the contrary, if Hero would be my wife.

BENEDICK. Is't come to this? In faith, hath not the world one man but he will wear his cap with suspicion? Shall I never see a bachelor of threescore again? Go to, i' faith, and thou wilt needs thrust thy neck into a yoke, wear the print of it, and sigh away Sundays. Look! Don Pedro is returned to seek you. 190

Re-enter DON PEDRO

DON PEDRO. What secret hath held you here, that you followed not to Leonato's?

BENEDICK. I would your grace would constrain me to tell.

DON PEDRO. I charge thee on thy allegiance. 194

BENEDICK. You hear, Count Claudio: I can be secret as a dumb man, I would have you think so (but on my allegiance, mark you this, on my allegiance) he is in love, with who? now that is your grace's part. Mark how short his answer is, 'With Hero, Leonato's short daughter.'

179. and QFf|an Rowe|if Pope.

188. and QFf|an Capell|if Pope.

191. *Re-enter* . . . | Enter Don

Pedro, Iohn the Bastard QFf. —

Scene IV Pope.

192. Leonato's | Leonato F₃F₄.

186. wear his cap with suspicion: marry and subject himself to the disquiet of jealousy.

189. Perhaps an allusion to the Puritans' observance of Sunday.

196-197. The punctuation (that of the Quarto and Folios) indicates that Benedick purposely leaves his humorous parenthesis to be taken either with what precedes or with what follows.

CLAUDIO. If this were so, so were it utt'red. 200

BENEDICK. Like the old tale, my lord: 'It is not so, nor 't was not so: but indeed, God forbid it should be so.'

CLAUDIO. If my passion change not shortly, God forbid it should be otherwise.

DON PEDRO. Amen, if you love her, for the lady is very well worthy. 206

CLAUDIO. You speak this to fetch me in, my lord.

DON PEDRO. By my troth, I speak my thought.

CLAUDIO. And, in faith, my lord, I spoke mine.

BENEDICK. And by my two faiths and troths, my lord, I spoke mine. 211

CLAUDIO. That I love her, I feel.

DON PEDRO. That she is worthy, I know.

BENEDICK. That I neither feel how she should be loved, nor know how she should be worthy, is the opinion that fire cannot melt out of me: I will die in it at the stake. 216

DON PEDRO. Thou wast ever an obstinate heretic in the despite of beauty.

CLAUDIO. And never could maintain his part, but in the force of his will. 220

BENEDICK. That a woman conceived me, I thank her: that she brought me up, I likewise give her most humble

211. spoke Q | speake F1F2.

200. utt'red: made known. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, V, i, 67.

201-202. Blakeway contributed to Malone's *Variorum Shakespeare* a version of an "old tale," in which "Mr. Fox," a kind of Bluebeard, repeats the expression, "It is not so, nor," etc., as an ironical comment when the heroine recounts the horrors seen in his house.

207. fetch me in: lead me to a confession.

219-220. the force of his will: wilful obstinacy. Heresy was defined in the schools as 'wilful choice.'

thanks: but that I will have a recheat winded in my forehead, or hang my bugle in an invisible baldrick, all women shall pardon me. Because I will not do them the wrong to mistrust any, I will do myself the right to trust none: and the fine is (for the which I may go the finer) I will live a bachelor. 228

DON PEDRO. I shall see thee, ere I die, look pale with love.

BENEDICK. With anger, with sickness, or with hunger, my lord, not with love: prove that ever I lose more blood with love than I will get again with drinking, pick out mine eyes with a ballad-maker's pen, and hang me up for the sign of blind Cupid. 235

DON PEDRO. Well, if ever thou dost fall from this faith, thou wilt prove a notable argument.

BENEDICK. If I do, hang me in a bottle like a cat, and shoot at me, and he that hits me, let him be clapp'd on the shoulder, and called Adam. 240

223. *recheat* | *rechate* Qff.

223-225. Benedick refers to the risk of disappointment and jealousy in marriage. 'To wind a recheat' was to sound a blast on the hunting horn to call the hounds together when the chase was to begin or continue, or when the hunt was over; the 'baldrick' was the belt in which the horn was hung.

227. *fine*: conclusion. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, i, 115: "the fine of his fines." 'Go the finer,' in the sense of 'go the better dressed,' contains an obvious pun.

237. *notable argument*: excellent subject for discussion.

238. Probably the 'bottle' was of wood or wicker. Cf. 'twiggen bottle,' *Othello*, II, iii, 152. From *Warres, or the Peace is broken* Steevens quotes, "arrowes flew faster than they did at a catte in a basket."

240. Theobald and Bishop Percy identified 'Adam' here with the famous outlaw and archer, Adam Bell, whose exploits are celebrated

DON PEDRO. Well, as time shall try :

'In time the savage bull doth bear the yoke.'

BENEDICK. The savage bull may, but if ever the sensible Benedick bear it, pluck off the bull's horns, and set them in my forehead, and let me be vilely painted, and in such great letters as they write 'Here is good horse to hire,' let them signify under my sign, 'Here you may see Benedick the married man.'

CLAUDIO. If this should ever happen, thou wouldst be horn-mad. 250

DON PEDRO. Nay, if Cupid have not spent all his quiver in Venice, thou wilt quake for this shortly.

BENEDICK. I look for an earthquake too, then.

DON PEDRO. Well, you will temporize with the hours. In the meantime, good Signior Benedick, repair to Leonato's: commend me to him, and tell him I will not fail him at supper, for indeed he hath made great preparation. 257

BENEDICK. I have almost matter enough in me for such an embassage, and so I commit you.

245. vilely Rowe | vildly QF4 | vildely F1F2F8.

in the ballad of *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly*, printed in the sixteenth century. Collier suggested that the man who hit the bottle was to be called, by way of distinction, the first man, that is, Adam.

241. try : prove. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, II, ii, 50.

242. Undoubtedly a reminiscence of a line in Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedie*, II, i, 3: "In time the sauage bull sustaines the yoake." Still earlier is Watson's *Ecatompathia*, where, as printed in 1582, occurs the line, "In time the Bull is brought to weare the yoake."

250. horn-mad : like a furious bull.

251-252. Venice was proverbial for gaiety and gallantry.

259. so I commit you : thus you stand committed by me (that is, to this engagement). Here and in line 261 the Quarto and Folios end

CLAUDIO. To the tuition of God. From my house, if I had it. 261

DON PEDRO. The sixth of July. Your loving friend, Benedick.

BENEDICK. Nay, mock not, mock not. The body of your discourse is sometime guarded with fragments, and the guards are but slightly basted on neither: ere you flout old ends any further, examine your conscience, and so I leave you. [Exit]

CLAUDIO. My liege, your highness now may do me good.

DON PEDRO. My love is thine to teach: teach it but how, And thou shalt see how apt it is to learn 271
Any hard lesson that may do thee good.

CLAUDIO. Hath Leonato any son, my lord?

DON PEDRO. No child but Hero, she's his only heir:
Dost thou affect her, Claudio?

CLAUDIO. O my lord, 275
When you went onward on this ended action,
I look'd upon her with a soldier's eye,
That lik'd, but had a rougher task in hand

269. Scene V Pope.

the speeches with a period. Most editors substitute a dash, thus taking the edge off the speeches that follow.

260. tuition: protection. The original (Latin) meaning. — From my house. In imitation of a formal letter.

262. sixth of July. Midsummer Day, which, since the adoption of the Gregorian calendar, falls on June 24. The eve of this day came to be celebrated amid the wildest revelry. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, v, 61: "Why, this is very midsummer madness."

265. guarded: ornamentally trimmed, braided.

266-267. flout old ends: quote sarcastically scraps and tags, bits of familiar verse and formal letter endings.

Than to drive liking to the name of love :

But now I am return'd and that war-thoughts 280

Have left their places vacant, in their rooms

Come thronging soft and delicate desires,

All prompting me how fair young Hero is,

Saying I lik'd her ere I went to wars.

DON PEDRO. Thou wilt be like a lover presently, 285

And tire the hearer with a book of words :

If thou dost love fair Hero, cherish it,

And I will break with her and with her father,

And thou shalt have her. Was't not to this end

That thou began'st to twist so fine a story ? 290

CLAUDIO. How sweetly you do minister to love,

That know love's grief by his complexion !

But lest my liking might too sudden seem,

I would have salv'd it with a longer treatise.

DON PEDRO. What need the bridge much broader than

the flood ? 295

The fairest grant is the necessity.

284. wars. QFf|wars— Staunton.

288-289. and with her father, And

thou shalt have her Q | Ff omit.

291. you do Q | do you Ff.

288. break : break (broach) the subject. So in line 305.

292. complexion : appearance. Cf. *Richard II*, III, ii, 194. Shakespeare uses the word 'complexion' in several senses : 'bodily habit,' 'constitution,' *Hamlet*, V, ii, 102 ; 'temperament,' *The Merchant of Venice*, III, i, 32 ; 'natural colour' (especially of the face), II, i, 267 ; *The Merchant of Venice*, II, i, 1. These meanings have come directly from the mediæval physiology.

294. salv'd : mitigated. — treatise : discourse, talk. Cf. 'a dismal treatise,' *Macbeth*, V, v, 12.

296. The best boon is that most necessary. The previous editions of Hudson's Shakespeare adopted Hayley's conjecture : "The fairest grant is to necessity."

Look, what will serve is fit: 't is once, thou lovest,
 And I will fit thee with the remedy.
 I know we shall have revelling to-night:
 I will assume thy part in some disguise, 300
 And tell fair Hero I am Claudio,
 And in her bosom I'll unclasp my heart,
 And take her hearing prisoner with the force
 And strong encounter of my amorous tale:
 Then after to her father will I break; 305
 And the conclusion is, she shall be thine.
 In practice let us put it presently. [Exeunt]

SCENE II. *A room in LEONATO'S house**Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO, meeting*

LEONATO. How now, brother! Where is my cousin your son? hath he provided this music?

ANTONIO. He is very busy about it; but, brother, I can tell you strange news that you yet dreamt not of.

LEONATO. Are they good? 5

SCENE II. *A room . . .* Capell |
 QFf omit.

1. *Enter . . . meeting* Globe | Enter
 Leonato and an old man, brother to

Leonato QFf | Re-enter Antonio and
 Leonato Pope.

4. *strange news* Q Capell Stee-
 vens Globe | *newes* Ff.

297. *once*: once for all, in short. Cf. *Coriolanus*, II, iii, 1; Dryden's *Maiden Queen*, IV, 1: "For if I have him not, I am resolved to die a maid, that's once, mother."

1. *cousin*. This word denoted especially nephew or niece, but was used loosely for any kinsmen, including the dependents of great families, who were little more than attendants.

5. *Are*. 'News' is singular or plural in Shakespeare. Cf. 'these ill news,' II, i, 157; 'this news,' V, ii, 90.

ANTONIO. As the event stamps them: but they have a good cover; they show well outward. The prince and Count Claudio, walking in a thick-pleached alley in mine orchard, were thus much overheard by a man of mine: the prince discovered to Claudio that he loved my niece your daughter, and meant to acknowledge it this night in a dance, and if he found her accordant, he meant to take the present time by the top, and instantly break with you of it. 13

LEONATO. Hath the fellow any wit that told you this?

ANTONIO. A good sharp fellow: I will send for him, and question him yourself. 16

LEONATO. No, no; we will hold it as a dream till it appear itself: but I will acquaint my daughter withal, that she may be the better prepared for an answer, if peradventure this be true. Go you and tell her of it. [*Enter Attendants.*] Cousins, you know what you have to do. O,

6. event stamps F₂F₃F₄ Rowe |
euent stamps QF₁.

8. mine Q | my Ff.

9. thus much Q | thus Ff.

20-21. [*Enter Attendants.*] Globe
| QFf omit.

6. As the event stamps them: time alone will tell.

8. thick-pleached: thickly intertwined. Cf. III, i, 7; *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, xiv, 73. — orchard: garden. The original meaning, as commonly in Shakespeare. Cf. II, iii, 4; III, i, 5.

13. top: forelock. Cf. *All's Well that Ends Well*, V, iii, 39.

17-18. it appear itself. Possibly a euphonious arrangement for 'it itself appear.' The view that 'appear' is used transitively here in the sense of 'show' is supported by *Cymbeline*, III, iv, 148, "That which, t' appear itself, must not yet be," and *Coriolanus*, IV, iii, 9, "Your favour is well appear'd by your tongue," though some editors read in these instances 'approve' and 'approv'd.' Cf. also *Cymbeline*, IV, ii, 47-48, "This youth, howe'er distress'd, appears he hath had Good ancestors." Murray gives no transitive use of 'appear.' Abbott, § 296, suggests that 'appear' may be used reflexively.

21. Cousins: friends. This is probably addressed to the attendants.

I cry you mercy, friend; go you with me, and I will use your skill. Good cousin, have a care this busy time. [*Exeunt*] 23

SCENE III. *The same*

Enter DON JOHN and CONRADE

CONRADE. What the good-year, my lord! why are you thus out of measure sad?

DON JOHN. There is no measure in the occasion that breeds; therefore the sadness is without limit.

CONRADE. You should hear reason. 5

DON JOHN. And when I have heard it, what blessing brings it?

CONRADE. If not a present remedy, at least a patient sufferance. 9

SCENE III Capell | Scene VI
Pope | QFf omit. — *The same* | QFf
omit.

1. *Enter* DON JOHN and CON-
RADE | *Enter* Sir Iohn the Bastard,

and Conrade his companion QFf.

4. breeds QFf | breeds it Theobald.

7. brings Q | bringeth Ff.

8. at least Q Camb Globe | yet
Ff Rowe Capell Delius.

22. cry you mercy : ask your pardon.

23. Good cousin. Probably Antonio's son, mentioned in line 1. In V, i, 277, Leonato, in speaking to Claudio of Hero, uses the expression "she alone is heir to both of us." Several suggestions have been made in explanation. Halliwell-Phillipps comments thus: "perhaps the present statement is purposely overdrawn. Claudio is not to be supposed sufficiently acquainted with the families to render a deception improbable of being believed by him. He had even asked Don Pedro whether Leonato had a son." See V, i, 277, and note.

1. good-year. A petty oath. This expression "came to be used in imprecatory phrases as denoting some undefined malefic power or agency." — Murray. Cf. *King Lear*, V, iii, 24: "The good-years shall devour them, flesh and fell."

4. breeds : multiplies itself. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, II, ii, 142.

DON JOHN. I wonder that thou (being as thou say'st thou art, born under Saturn) goest about to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief. I cannot hide what I am: I must be sad when I have cause, and smile at no man's jests; eat when I have stomach, and wait for no man's leisure; sleep when I am drowsy, and tend on no man's business; laugh when I am merry, and claw no man in his humour.

17

CONRADE. Yea, but you must not make the full show of this, till you may do it without controlment. You have of late stood out against your brother, and he hath ta'en you newly into his grace, where it is impossible you should take true root but by the fair weather that you make yourself: it is needful that you frame the season for your own harvest.

24

DON JOHN. I had rather be a canker in a hedge than a rose in his grace, and it better fits my blood to be disdain'd of all than to fashion a carriage to rob love from any: in this (though I cannot be said to be a flattering honest man) it must not be denied but I am a plain-dealing villain. I am trusted with a muzzle, and enfranchis'd with a

11. moral QF₁ | mortall F₂F₃F₄.

22. true Q | Ff omit.

11. born under Saturn: of a saturnine, naturally melancholy, disposition. An astrological allusion.

11-12. moral . . . mischief. The double alliteration and balanced antithesis, and Don John's diction generally, are euphuistic. — mortifying: destructive. The original (Latin) meaning.

16. claw: flatter, fawn upon.

19. controlment: restraint. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, II, i, 68: "Without controlment, justice, or revenge."

25. canker: dog-rose. The contrast between the wild rose and the cultivated is also brought out in *Sonnets*, LIV, 5-12, and *1 Henry IV*, I, iii, 175-176.

clog, therefore I have decreed not to sing in my cage. If I had my mouth, I would bite; if I had my liberty, I would do my liking: in the meantime, let me be that I am, and seek not to alter me.

CONRADE. Can you make no use of your discontent? 35

DON JOHN. I make all use of it, for I use it only.
Who comes here? what news, Borachio?

Enter BORACHIO

BORACHIO. I came yonder from a great supper: the prince your brother is royally entertained by Leonato, and I can give you intelligence of an intended marriage. 40

DON JOHN. Will it serve for any model to build mischief on?
What is he for a fool that betroths himself to unquietness?

BORACHIO. Marry, it is your brother's right hand.

DON JOHN. Who? the most exquisite Claudio?

BORACHIO. Even he. 45

DON JOHN. A proper squire! and who, and who? which way looks he?

BORACHIO. Marry, on Hero, the daughter and heir of Leonato.

DON JOHN. A very forward March-chick! How came you to this? 51

36. make Q | will make Ff.

43. brother's Ff | bothers Q.

48. on Ff | one Q.

50. came QF₁ | come F₂F₃F₄.

38. *Enter BORACHIO.* So in the Quarto and Folios. Don John has caught sight of Borachio before he enters.

41. model: ground plan, foundation. Cf. 2 *Henry IV*, I, iii, 42.

42. What is he for a: what kind of. Cf. the German *was für ein*.

46. proper: handsome. Used ironically, as in IV, i, 301.

50. forward March-chick: presumptuous youngster. If Hero is referred to, 'forward' will mean 'precocious.'

BORACHIO. Being entertain'd for a perfumer, as I was smoking a musty room, comes me the prince and Claudio, hand in hand, in sad conference: I whipt me behind the arras, and there heard it agreed upon that the prince should woo Hero for himself, and having obtain'd her, give her to Count Claudio. 57

DON JOHN. Come, come, let us thither: this may prove food to my displeasure. That young start-up hath all the glory of my overthrow: if I can cross him any way, I bless myself every way. You are both sure, and will assist me?

CONRADE. To the death, my lord. 62

DON JOHN. Let us to the great supper: their cheer is the greater that I am subdued. Would the cook were o' my mind! Shall we go prove what's to be done?

BORACHIO. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt*]

53. me Q | Ff omit.

64. o' | a Q | of Ff.

53. smoking . . . room. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, I, 49. Burton, in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, says: "the smoake of juniper is in greate request with us at Oxford, to sweeten our chambers." Rowe, followed by Pope, made Borachio say, "smoking in a musty room." Shakespeare is supposed never to allude to tobacco, but may Rowe not have stumbled on Borachio's meaning? — comes. For the inflection in -s preceding a plural subject, see Abbott, § 335. — me: bless me! An ethical dative. Cf. *Coriolanus*, I, i, 131.

55. arras: tapestry. From Arras, a town in Artois.

61. sure: to be relied on. Cf. *Coriolanus*, I, i, 176.

65. go prove. For the simple infinitive with 'go' and 'come' see Abbott, § 349. Cf. II, ii, 50; II, iii, 240; III, iii, 81-82; IV, i, 326; V, i, 83; V, ii, 90.

ACT II

SCENE I. *A hall in LEONATO'S house*

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, HERO, BEATRICE, *and others*

LEONATO. Was not Count John here at supper?

ANTONIO. I saw him not.

BEATRICE. How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see him but I am heart-burn'd an hour after.

HERO. He is of a very melancholy disposition. 5

BEATRICE. He were an excellent man that were made just in the midway between him and Benedick: the one is too like an image and says nothing, and the other too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling. 9

LEONATO. Then half Signior Benedick's tongue in Count John's mouth, and half Count John's melancholy in Signior Benedick's face, —

BEATRICE. With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman in the world, if a could get her good will. 15

ACT II | Actus Secundus Ff | Q omits. — SCENE I Pope | QFf omit. — *A hall* . . . Globe | QFf omit.

brother, his wife, Hero his daughter, and Beatrice his neece, and a (and F3F4) kinsman QF1F2.

1. *Enter* . . . | *Enter* Leonato, his

15. a Q | he Ff.

SCENE I. *A hall* . . . "It may be doubted whether the author did not intend this scene to take place in the garden." — Camb.

9. *my lady's eldest son*: a spoiled child. Proverbial.

12. The Quarto and Folios close the speech with a period.

LEONATO. By my troth, niece, thou wilt never get thee a husband, if thou be so shrewd of thy tongue. 17

ANTONIO. In faith, she's too curst.

BEATRICE. Too curst is more than curst: I shall lessen God's sending that way, for it is said, 'God sends a curst cow short horns,' but to a cow too curst he sends none.

LEONATO. So, by being too curst, God will send you no horns. 23

BEATRICE. Just, if he send me no husband, for the which blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a beard on his face! I had rather lie in the woollen.

LEONATO. You may light on a husband that hath no beard. 29

BEATRICE. What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel, and make him my waiting gentlewoman? He that hath a beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no beard is less than a man: and he that is more than a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a man, I am not for him: therefore I will even take sixpence in earnest of the bear-ward, and lead his apes into hell. 36

28. on Q | upon Ff.

QF₁F₂ | Bearherd F₃F₄

36. bear-ward Collier | Berrord

17. 'Shrewd' is properly the past participle of 'shrew,' meaning 'curse.' Cf. 'curst and shrewd,' *The Taming of the Shrew*, I, i, 185.

24. Just: exactly so. So in V, i, 159.

27. in the woollen. 'Between the blankets,' or perhaps 'in my shroud.' Burial in woolen was as early as the sixteenth century, and in 1678 was required by law.

36. bear-ward: bear-keeper. The spelling of the Quarto and Folios probably indicates the popular pronunciation. — lead . . . hell. Apes often rode on the bears led by the bear-ward. To "lead apes in hell"

LEONATO. Well then, go you into hell.

BEATRICE. No, but to the gate, and there will the devil meet me with horns on his head, and say, 'Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to heaven, here's no place for you maids': so deliver I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter: for the heavens, he shows me where the bachelors sit, and there live we as merry as the day is long.

ANTONIO. [To HERO] Well, niece, I trust you will be rul'd by your father. 45

BEATRICE. Yes, faith, it is my cousin's duty to make curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please you': but yet for all that, cousin, let him be a handsome fellow, or else make another curtsy, and say, 'Father, as it please me.'

LEONATO. Well, niece, I hope to see you one day fitted with a husband. 51

BEATRICE. Not till God make men of some other metal than earth. Would it not grieve a woman to be overmaster'd with a piece of valiant dust? to make an account of her life to a clod of wayward marl? No, uncle, I'll none: Adam's sons are my brethren, and truly I hold it a sin to match in my kindred. 57

39. horns | his horns F4.

44. [To HERO] Rowe | QFf omit.

47, 49. curtsy | curtsie Ff | cursie Q.

47. Father Q | Ff omit.

49. please QF1 | pleases F2F3F4.

54. make an Q | make Ff.

was the proverbial fate of an old maid (cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, II, i, 34), a fit punishment, suggests Dr. Aldis Wright, for those who had escaped the plague of children in this life. Beatrice substitutes 'into' for 'in.'

37. The punctuation of the Quarto and Folios.

41-42. Saint Peter: for the heavens, he. So in the Quarto and Folios. Most editors punctuate, "Saint Peter for the heavens; he." 'For the heavens' was a petty oath (cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, II, ii, 12).

47, 49. curtsy. Steevens and some modern editors print 'courtesy.'

*Don't
wish
marriage*

LEONATO. Daughter, remember what I told you: if the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer.

BEATRICE. The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in every thing, and so dance out the answer. For, hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinquepace: the first suit is hot and hasty like a Scotch jig (and full as fantastical), the wedding mannerly modest (as a measure), full of state and ancientry, and then comes repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinquepace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave.

LEONATO. Cousin, you apprehend passing shrewdly. 70

BEATRICE. I have a good eye, uncle: I can see a church by daylight.

LEONATO. The revellers are entering, brother: make good room.

[*All put on their masks*]

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, BALTHASAR, DON JOHN, BORACHIO, MARGARET, URSULA, *and others, masked*

DON PEDRO. Lady, will you walk about with your friend?

HERO. So you walk softly, and look sweetly, and say

69. sink | sincke Q | sinks F₁F₂.

74. [*All . . .*] Globe | QFf omit.

75. *Enter . . .* | *Enter* Prince,

Pedro, Claudio, and Benedicke, and Balthasar, or dumbe Iohn, Maskers with a drum Ff. — Scene II Pope.

59. kind: way. Here probably pronounced 'kinn'd' and used with a punning reference to 'kindred,' line 57. Cf. I, i, 25.

61. time. A double meaning, as in 'measure' in the next line. — important: importunate. Cf. *King Lear*, IV, iv, 26.

64. The 'measure' (as in line 66) was a formal court dance. Cf. *Richard II*, I, iii, 291. The 'cinquepace,' colloquially pronounced 'sink apace,' and used here punningly, seems to have been the first five steps of the 'nimble galliard' in *Henry V*, I, ii, 252.

nothing, I am yours for the walk, and especially when I walk away.

DON PEDRO. With me in your company.

HERO. I may say so when I please. 80

DON PEDRO. And when please you to say so?

HERO. When I like your favour, for God defend the lute should be like the case.

DON PEDRO. My visor is Philemon's roof, within the house is Jove. 85

HERO. Why, then your visor should be thatch'd.

DON PEDRO. Speak low if you speak love.

[*Drawing her aside*]

BALTHASAR. Well, I would you did like me.

MARGARET. So would not I for your own sake, for I have many ill qualities. 90

BALTHASAR. Which is one?

MARGARET. I say my prayers aloud.

BALTHASAR. I love you the better: the hearer's may cry, Amen.

79. company. QFf | company?
Globe.

85. Jove Q | Loue F₁ | love F₂F₃F₄.

87. [*Drawing her aside*] Capell.

88, 91, 93. QFf give to Benedick |

Theobald gives to Balthasar.

82. favour: looks, appearance. Cf. *As You Like It*, IV, iii, 87.—
defend: forbid. Cf. *Richard II*, I, iii, 18.

84-87. These three speeches make up a rhymed couplet of the seven-stress iambic verse in which Golding's translation of Ovid is written. The reference is to the story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, viii, of Jupiter and Mercury being entertained by an old couple, Baucis and Philemon, who lived in a cottage, "the rooffe thereof was thatched all with straw and fennish reede."—Golding. Cf. *As You Like It*, III, iii, 10-11: "worse than Jove in a thatch'd house."

87. you. "I do not think that 'you' here refers to Hero; it is the impersonal 'you.'"—Furness.

MARGARET. God match me with a good dancer! 95

BALTHASAR. Amen.

MARGARET. And God keep him out of my sight when the dance is done! Answer, clerk.

BALTHASAR. No more words: the clerk is answered.

URSULA. I know you well enough; you are Signior Antonio. 101

ANTONIO. At a word, I am not.

URSULA. I know you by the wagglings of your head.

ANTONIO. To tell you true, I counterfeit him.

URSULA. You could never do him so ill-well, unless you were the very man. Here's his dry hand up and down: you are he, you are he. 107

ANTONIO. At a word, I am not.

URSULA. Come, come, do you think I do not know you by your excellent wit? can virtue hide itself? Go to, mum, you are he: graces will appear, and there's an end. 111

BEATRICE. Will you not tell me who told you so?

BENEDICK. No, you shall pardon me.

BEATRICE. Nor will you not tell me who you are?

BENEDICK. Not now. 115

BEATRICE. That I was disdainful, and that I had my

105. ill-well Theobald | ill well Qff.

98. clerk. The 'clerk' led the responses in the Church service.

102. At a word: in a word, once for all. Cf. *Coriolanus*, I, iii, 122. "No, at a word, madam."

105. do him so ill-well: act well such a bad part.

106. dry hand. A 'dry hand' signified a cold nature. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, I, iii, 79; *Othello*, III, iv, 36. — up and down: exactly. Cf. *Titus Andronicus*, V, ii, 107. There is a play on words: his hand is like his head (line 103).

116. That I was disdainful. Cf. I, i, 111-116.

good wit out of the Hundred Merry Tales: well, this was Signior Benedick that said so.

BENEDICK. What's he?

BEATRICE. I am sure you know him well enough. 120

BENEDICK. Not I, believe me.

BEATRICE. Did he never make you laugh?

BENEDICK. I pray you, what is he?

BEATRICE. Why, he is the prince's jester: a very dull fool; only his gift is in devising impossible slanders: none but libertines delight in him, and the commendation is not in his wit, but in his villainy, for he both pleases men and angers them, and then they laugh at him and beat him. I am sure he is in the fleet: I would he had boarded me. 129

BENEDICK. When I know the gentleman, I'll tell him what you say.

BEATRICE. Do, do, he'll but break a comparison or two on me, which peradventure (not mark'd, or not laugh'd at) strikes him into melancholy, and then there's a partridge wing saved, for the fool will eat no supper that night. [*Music.*] We must follow the leaders. 136

BENEDICK. In every good thing.

BEATRICE. Nay, if they lead to any ill, I will leave them at the next turning. [*Dance. Then exeunt all except DON JOHN, BORACHIO, and CLAUDIO*]

127. pleases Q | pleaseth Ff.

136. [*Music.*] QFf omit.

139. [*Dance ...*] Exeunt. Musicke for the dance Ff. — Scene III Pope.

117. Hundred Merry Tales. A sixteenth century jest book.

125. only his gift is: his gift is only. Such transpositions are common in Elizabethan literature. Cf. *Julius Caesar*, V, iv, 12. See Abbott, § 420. — impossible: incredible.

129. fleet: company. — boarded: accosted. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, ii, 170.

132-136. The punctuation is that of the Folios.

gunning
John
mission
DON JOHN. Sure my brother is amorous on Hero, and hath withdrawn her father to break with him about it: the ladies follow her, and but one visor remains. 142

BORACHIO. And that is Claudio: I know him by his bearing.

DON JOHN. Are not you Signior Benedick?

CLAUDIO. You know me well; I am he. 146

DON JOHN. Signior, you are very near my brother in his love: he is enamour'd on Hero. I pray you dissuade him from her: she is no equal for his birth: you may do the part of an honest man in it. 150

CLAUDIO. How know you he loves her?

DON JOHN. I heard him swear his affection.

BORACHIO. So did I too, and he swore he would marry her to-night.

DON JOHN. Come, let us to the banquet. 155

[*Exeunt* DON JOHN and BORACHIO]

CLAUDIO. Thus answer I in name of Benedick,
But hear these ill news with the ears of Claudio:

'Tis certain so, the prince wooes for himself:

Friendship is constant in all other things,

Save in the office and affairs of love:

160

Therefore all hearts in love use their own tongues.

Let every eye negotiate for itself,

And trust no agent: for beauty is a witch,

155. [*Exeunt* . . .] Ex. manet Clau. Ff.

155. banquet: dessert. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, V, 2, 9.

161. use. Either the subjunctive used imperatively (Abbott, § 364), or the indicative in a simple statement of fact.

163-164. Witches made and melted wax figures of the persons whom they wished either to influence or to injure.

Against whose charms faith melteth into blood.

This is an accident of hourly proof, 165

Which I mistrusted not. Farewell, therefore, Hero!

Re-enter BENEDICK

BENEDICK. Count Claudio?

CLAUDIO. Yea, the same.

BENEDICK. Come, will you go with me?

CLAUDIO. Whither? 170

BENEDICK. Even to the next willow, about your own business, county. What fashion will you wear the garland of? about your neck, like an usurer's chain? or under your arm, like a lieutenant's scarf? You must wear it one way, for the prince hath got your Hero. 175

CLAUDIO. I wish him joy of her.

BENEDICK. Why, that's spoken like an honest drovier, so they sell bullocks: but did you think the prince would have served you thus?

CLAUDIO. I pray you leave me. 180

172. county Q | count Ff.

164. *faith*: fidelity, constancy. Often so. Cf. I, i, 68. — *blood*: passion. In I, i, 123, and I, iii, 26, it means 'temper,' 'disposition.'

165. *accident*: occurrence, event. The original (Latin) meaning.

171. The willow was the badge of forsaken lovers. Cf. lines 198–199. So in Desdemona's song, *Othello*, IV, iii, 28–56. Cf. *The Faerie Queene*, I, i, 9:

the Firre that weepeth still:

The Willow, worne of forlorne Paramours.

172. *county*: count. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 219.

173. Rich merchants, many of them bankers lending out money at high interest, often wore obtrusive gold chains.

177. *drovier*: drover. A common form in Elizabethan literature. Not elsewhere in Shakespeare. — *so*: just in the way in which.

BENEDICK. Ho! now you strike like the blind man: 't was the boy that stole your meat, and you 'll beat the post. 182

CLAUDIO. If it will not be, I'll leave you. [*Exit*]

BENEDICK. Alas, poor hurt fowl! now will he creep into sedges. But that my Lady Beatrice should know me, and not know me! The prince's fool! Ha? It may be I go under that title because I am merry: yea, but so I am apt to do myself wrong: I am not so reputed, it is the base, though bitter, disposition of Beatrice that puts the world into her person, and so gives me out. Well, I'll be revenged as I may. 191

Re-enter DON PEDRO

DON PEDRO. Now, signior, where's the count? did you see him?

BENEDICK. Troth, my lord, I have played the part of

181. blind man | blindman Qff. the Prince Ff (see note below). —
192. *Re-enter* DON PEDRO | Enter Scene IV Pope.

181-182. Probably an allusion to an anecdote well known in Shakespeare's day. Eschenburg suggests that it may refer to an incident in the widely popular Spanish picaresque romance *Lazarillo de Tormes*, translated into English in 1586. Here Lazarillo in revenge for being cheated out of a sausage makes a blind beggar jump against a post.

188-190. it is the base . . . gives me out. On account of the implied inconsistency between 'base' and 'bitter,' attempts have been made to amend this passage. The general meaning is, Beatrice is bitter enough to father her own thoughts on the world, and base enough to quote the world as authority for them. For 'gives me out' cf. *The Comedy of Errors*, I, ii, 1.

192. *Re-enter* . . . The Quarto adds "Hero, Leonato, John and Borachio, and Conrade." 'This' in line 196 led Capell to make Hero and Leonato enter with Don Pedro.

Lady Fame. I found him here as melancholy as a lodge in a warren. I told him, and I think I told him true, that your grace had got the good will of this young lady, and I off'red him my company to a willow-tree, either to make him a garland, as being forsaken, or to bind him up a rod, as being worthy to be whipp'd. 200

DON PEDRO. To be whipp'd! what's his fault?

BENEDICK. The flat transgression of a school-boy, who being overjoyed with finding a bird's nest, shows it his companion, and he steals it.

DON PEDRO. Wilt thou make a trust a transgression? the transgression is in the stealer. 206

BENEDICK. Yet it had not been amiss the rod had been made, and the garland too; for the garland he might have worn himself, and the rod he might have bestowed on you, who, as I take it, have stol'n his bird's nest. 210

DON PEDRO. I will but teach them to sing, and restore them to the owner.

BENEDICK. If their singing answer your saying, by my faith you say honestly.

DON PEDRO. The Lady Beatrice hath a quarrel to you:

196. think I Q | thinke, Ff.

Ff | the Rann | the Walker.

197. good Q | Ff omit. — this Q

199. up Q | Ff omit.

195-196. A most expressive image of dismal loneliness. A 'warren' was a place for keeping wild animals, and secured by royal grant against all intruders, for the owner's exclusive sport; so that the special duty of the keeper of it was to maintain an utter solitude about himself and his lodging. The figure suggested to Steevens *Isaiah*, i, 8: "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers."

215. quarrel to you. Cf. *Coriolanus*, IV, v, 133: "Had we no quarrel also to Rome?" See Abbott, § 187.

the gentleman that danc'd with her told her she is much wrong'd by you. 217

BENEDICK. O, she misus'd me past the endurance of a block! an oak but with one green leaf on it would have answered her: my very visor began to assume life and scold with her. She told me, not thinking I had been myself, that I was the prince's jester, and that I was duller than a great thaw, huddling jest upon jest, with such impossible conveyance upon me, that I stood like a man at a mark, with a whole army shooting at me: she speaks poniards, and every word stabs: if her breath were as terrible as her terminations, there were no living near her, she would infect to the north star. I would not marry her, though she were endowed with all that Adam had left him before he transgress'd: she would have made Hercules have turn'd spit, yea, and have cleft his club to make the fire too: come, talk not of her, you shall find her the infernal Ate in good apparel. I would to God some scholar would conjure her, for certainly, while she is here, a man

222. and that Ff | that Q.

227. as her Q | as Ff.

218. misus'd: reviled. Cf. *As You Like It*, IV, i, 205.

219. but with: with but. See note, line 125.

223-224. impossible conveyance: incredible dexterity. 'Conveyance' means 'management of a thing,' then 'skillful management,' then 'underhand dealing.' Cf. *1 Henry VI*, I, iii, 2.

226. poniards. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 414.

227. terminations: epithets. Not elsewhere in Shakespeare.

230-232. Hercules served three years with Omphale, who dressed him as a woman and made him spin wool with her handmaidens.

233. Ate (dissyllabic) was the goddess of vengeance and discord. —scholar. Latin, the scholar's tongue, was the usual language in which evil spirits were exorcised. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, i, 42.

may live as quiet in hell as in a sanctuary, and people sin upon purpose, because they would go thither; so indeed all disquiet, horror, and perturbation follows her. 237

DON PEDRO. Look, here she comes.

Re-enter CLAUDIO, BEATRICE, HERO, *and* LEONATO

BENEDICK. Will your grace command me any service to the world's end? I will go on the slightest errand now to the Antipodes that you can devise to send me on: I will fetch you a toothpicker now from the furthest inch of Asia: bring you the length of Prester John's foot: fetch you a hair off the great Cham's beard: do you any embassy to the Pigmies, rather than hold three words' conference with this harpy. You have no employment for me? 246

DON PEDRO. None, but to desire your good company.

BENEDICK. O God, sir, here's a dish I love not: I cannot endure my Lady Tongue. [*Exit*]

DON PEDRO. Come, lady, come; you have lost the heart of Signior Benedick. 251

239. Scene V Pope.

240. errand F₈F₄ | arrand QF₁F₂.

249. my Lady Tongue Q | this Lady

tongue F₁ Theobald Warburton | this

Ladyes tongue F₂F₈F₄ | this lady's

tongue Rowe Pope Hanmer Capell.

237. follows. This form may be a real plural, a relic of the old northern plural in -s; or the three nominatives may be regarded as expressing one condition.

243-245. In the Maundeville cycle of legend Prester (Presbyter, Priest) John was a mythical Christian ruler of the Far East. In later stories he was of Abyssinia, "from the red sea almost to the Aethiopike Ocean." 'The great Cham' (or Caan of Cathaya, the Khan of Tartary) also belongs to the Maundeville legendary matter. Near his realms was the "land of Pigmie," where are men "of little stature, for they are but three spans long." — *Voiage and Travaile of Syr John Maundeville*.

BEATRICE. Indeed, my lord, he lent it me awhile, and I gave him use for it, a double heart for his single one: marry, once before he won it of me, with false dice, therefore your grace may well say I have lost it. 255

DON PEDRO. You have put him down, lady, you have put him down.

BEATRICE. So I would not he should do me, my lord. I have brought Count Claudio, whom you sent me to seek.

DON PEDRO. Why, how now, count! wherefore are you sad? 261

CLAUDIO. Not sad, my lord.

DON PEDRO. How then? sick?

CLAUDIO. Neither, my lord.

BEATRICE. The count is neither sad, nor sick, nor merry, nor well; but civil count, civil as an orange, and something of that jealous complexion. 267

DON PEDRO. I' faith, lady, I think your blazon to be true; though I'll be sworn, if he be so, his conceit is false. Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero

253. for his Q | for a Ff.

267. of that Q | of a Ff.

253. use: interest, usury. Cf. *Sonnets*, VI, 5. Beatrice, in this speech, indicates that she and Benedick have had passages at arms before the action of the present play. "Enough is here said to explain Benedick's first greeting to Beatrice as 'Lady Disdain.' Between the lines there can be almost discerned the plot of another play." — Furness. See Introduction, Sources.

266. civil as an orange. A common Elizabethan pun on the Seville orange, an orange that Cotgrave in his definition of *aigredouce* describes as "between sweete and sower."

267. jealous complexion. Yellow is the traditional hue of jealousy.

268. blazon: description. A heraldic term, influenced by 'blaze' in the sense of 'proclaim' (as with a trumpet).

269. conceit: conception, notion.

is won: I have broke with her father, and his good will obtained. Name the day of marriage, and God give thee joy!

273

LEONATO. Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes: his grace hath made the match, and all grace say Amen to it.

276

BEATRICE. Speak, count, 't is your cue.

CLAUDIO. Silence is the perfectest herald of joy: I were but little happy if I could say how much. Lady, as you are mine, I am yours: I give away myself for you, and dote upon the exchange.

281

BEATRICE. Speak, cousin, or, if you cannot, stop his mouth with a kiss, and let not him speak neither.

DON PEDRO. In faith, lady, you have a merry heart.

BEATRICE. Yea, my lord; I thank it, poor fool, it keeps on the windy side of care. My cousin tells him in his ear that he is in her heart.

287

CLAUDIO. And so she doth, cousin.

BEATRICE. Good Lord, for alliance! Thus goes every

279. much. | much? QFf.

287. her Q | my Ff.

275-276. his grace . . . all grace. Cf. *All's Well that Ends Well* II, i, 163. 'All grace' refers to God, the source of grace.

277. cue: catchword. The signal for an actor to speak.

289. Good Lord, for alliance! "Claudio has just called Beatrice cousin. I suppose . . . the meaning is, 'Good Lord, here have I got a new kinsman by marriage!'" — Malone. Boswell's interpretation is, "Good Lord, how many alliances are forming!"

289-290. goes . . . world. 'To go to the world' (*All's Well that Ends Well*, I, iii, 19-20) and 'to be a woman of the world' (*As You Like It*, V, iii, 4-5) were common expressions for 'to be married.' They probably arose from contrast to the devotion to the Church, which involved giving up the world.

one to the world but I, and I am sunburn'd: I may sit in a corner and cry heigh-ho for a husband! 291

DON PEDRO. Lady Beatrice, I will get you one.

BEATRICE. I would rather have one of your father's getting. Hath your grace ne'er a brother like you? Your father got excellent husbands, if a maid could come by them. 296

DON PEDRO. Will you have me, lady?

BEATRICE. No, my lord, unless I might have another for working-days: your grace is too costly to wear every day: but I beseech your grace, pardon me, I was born to speak all mirth, and no matter. 301

DON PEDRO. Your silence most offends me, and to be merry best becomes you, for out of question you were born in a merry hour.

303. out of Ff | out a Q.

290. sunburn'd. The probable meaning is simply 'homely,' 'not presentable,' and therefore 'neglected.' Cf. *Troilus and Cressida*, I, iii, 282-283: "The Grecian dames are sunburnt and not worth The splinter of a lance"; *Hamlet*, I, ii, 67: "I am too much i' th' sun"; *King Lear*, II, ii, 168-169: "Thou out of heaven's benediction com'st To the warm sun." Hunter, in his *New Illustrations of Shakespeare*, suggests that such expressions had their origin in *Psalms*, cxxi, 6, which in the Psalter used in the old ritual for the churching of women reads, "The sun shall not burn thee." "The matron surrounded by her husband and children, was one who had received the benediction that the sun should not burn her; while the unmarried woman, who had received no such benediction, was spoken of as one 'still left exposed to the burning of the sun.'"

291. heigh-ho for a husband. Probably a reminiscence of a popular song. Cf. III, iv, 47-48.

301. matter: sense. As in I, i, 258. Cf. *As You Like It*, II, i, 68: "For then he's full of matter."

BEATRICE. No, sure, my lord, my mother cried, but then there was a star danc'd, and under that was I born. Cousins, God give you joy! 307

LEONATO. Niece, will you look to those things I told you of?

BEATRICE. I cry you mercy, uncle: by your grace's pardon. [Exit] 311

DON PEDRO. By my troth, a pleasant-spirited lady.

LEONATO. There's little of the melancholy element in her, my lord: she is never sad but when she sleeps, and not ever sad then; for I have heard my daughter say, she hath often dreamt of unhappiness, and wak'd herself with laughing. 317

DON PEDRO. She cannot endure to hear tell of a husband.

LEONATO. O, by no means: she mocks all her wooers out of suit. 321

DON PEDRO. She were an excellent wife for Benedick.

LEONATO. O Lord, my lord, if they were but a week married, they would talk themselves mad.

DON PEDRO. County Claudio, when mean you to go to church? 326

312. Scene VI Pope.

325. County | Countie Q | Counte F1.

306. star danc'd. It was a popular belief that the sun danced on Easter Day. Another astrological allusion. See note I, iii, 11. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, I, iii, 142. In *King Lear*, I, ii, 128-144, Shakespeare makes Edmund ridicule these astrological notions.

310-311. cry you mercy: beg your pardon. Beatrice then asks the prince's pardon for withdrawing.

316. unhappiness. The ordinary meaning of the word yields excellent sense, but Schmidt interprets it as 'mischief.' Theobald reads 'an happiness.'

CLAUDIO. To-morrow, my lord: time goes on crutches till love have all his rites.

LEONATO. Not till Monday, my dear son, which is hence a just seven-night; and a time too brief, too, to have all things answer my mind. 33^I

DON PEDRO. Come, you shake the head at so long a breathing: but I warrant thee, Claudio, the time shall not go dully by us. I will in the interim undertake one of Hercules' labours, which is, to bring Signior Benedick and the Lady Beatrice into a mountain of affection th' one with th' other. I would fain have it a match, and I doubt not but to fashion it, if you three will but minister such assistance as I shall give you direction.

LEONATO. My lord, I am for you, though it cost me ten nights' watchings. 34^I

CLAUDIO. And I, my lord.

DON PEDRO. And you too, gentle Hero?

HERO. I will do any modest office, my lord, to help my cousin to a good husband. 34⁵

DON PEDRO. And Benedick is not the unhopefullest husband that I know. Thus far can I praise him: he is of a noble strain, of approved valour, and confirm'd honesty: I will teach you how to humour your cousin, that she shall

331. my Q | Ff omit.

330. just seven-night: exact week. Cf. 'a just pound,' *The Merchant of Venice*, IV, i, 327.

336. th' one. This, the reading of the Quarto and Folios, approximates the Elizabethan pronunciation, the *o* being sounded as in *alone*.

344. modest: moderate, within bounds. The original (Latin) meaning. Cf. *Macbeth*, IV, iii, 119; *King Lear*, II, iv, 25.

348. strain: lineage, descent. Cf. *Henry V*, II, iv, 51.

fall in love with Benedick, and I, with your two helps, will so practise on Benedick that in despite of his quick wit, and his queasy stomach, he shall fall in love with Beatrice. If we can do this, Cupid is no longer an archer: his glory shall be ours, for we are the only love-gods. Go in with me, and I will tell you my drift. [*Exeunt*] 355

SCENE II. *The same**Enter* DON JOHN *and* BORACHIO

DON JOHN. It is so: the Count Claudio shall marry the daughter of Leonato.

BORACHIO. Yea, my lord, but I can cross it.

DON JOHN. Any bar, any cross, any impediment, will be medicinable to me: I am sick in displeasure to him, and whatsoever comes athwart his affection ranges evenly with mine. How canst thou cross this marriage? 7

BORACHIO. Not honestly, my lord, but so covertly that no dishonesty shall appear in me.

DON JOHN. Show me briefly how. 10

355. [*Exeunt*] Exit QFf.

changes Pope | QFf omit.

SCENE II Capell | Scene VII Pope |
QFf omit. — *The same* Globe | Scene

1. *Enter* DON JOHN . . . Rowe |
Enter Iohn . . . QFf.

351. **practise on**: work upon, delude. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, i, 36: "I will practise on this drunken man." Cf. 'practice' meaning 'scheming,' IV, i, 183, and 'practice' in the ordinary sense, V, i, 235.

352. **queasy stomach**: fastidious (squeamish) taste.

1. **shall**. Either 'is to' or 'is going to.' See Abbott, § 315.

5. **medicinable**: medicinal. Cf. *Cymbeline*, III, ii, 33: "Some griefs are med'cinable, that is one of them." The passive form with the active sense.

BORACHIO. I think I told your lordship a year since, how much I am in the favour of Margaret, the waiting gentlewoman to Hero.

DON JOHN. I remember.

BORACHIO. I can at any unseasonable instant of the night appoint her to look out at her lady's chamber-window. 16

DON JOHN. What life is in that, to be the death of this marriage?

BORACHIO. The poison of that lies in you to temper: go you to the prince your brother; spare not to tell him that he hath wronged his honour in marrying the renowned Claudio (whose estimation do you mightily hold up) to a contaminated stale, such a one as Hero. 23

DON JOHN. What proof shall I make of that?

BORACHIO. Proof enough, to misuse the prince, to vex Claudio, to undo Hero, and kill Leonato: look you for any other issue?

DON JOHN. Only to despite them, I will endeavour any thing. 29

BORACHIO. Go, then; find me a meet hour to draw Don Pedro and the Count Claudio alone: tell them that you know that Hero loves me, intend a kind of zeal both to the prince and Claudio, as (in love of your brother's honour,

30. Don Q | on Ff.

33. in Q | in a Ff.

19. temper: mix, compound. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, ii, 339: "It is a poison temp'ed by himself"; *Cymbeline*, V, v, 250: "To temper poisons for her"; *Romeo and Juliet*, III, v, 97-98: "if you could find out but a man To bear a poison, I would temper it."

32. intend: pretend. In the sixteenth century 'intend' and 'pretend' were often interchanged. Cf. *Richard III*, III, vii, 45.

33-35. In the Quarto and Folios the parentheses include 'as' and end with 'match' (line 34).

who hath made this match, and his friend's reputation, who is thus like to be cozen'd with the semblance of a maid) that you have discover'd thus: they will scarcely believe this without trial: offer them instances which shall bear no less likelihood than to see me at her chamber-window, hear me call Margaret Hero, hear Margaret term me Claudio, and bring them to see this the very night before the intended wedding, for in the meantime I will so fashion the matter that Hero shall be absent, and there shall appear such seeming truths of Hero's disloyalty that jealousy shall be call'd assurance, and all the preparation overthrown. 44

DON JOHN. Grow this to what adverse issue it can, I will put it in practice. Be cunning in the working this, and thy fee is a thousand ducats.

39. Claudio QFf | Borachio Pope
(Theobald conj.).

41. so F₁F₂ | F₃F₄ omit.
43. truths Ff | truth Q.

39. Claudio. Theobald's suggestion that this be changed to 'Borachio' is adopted by many editors, and is found in most editions for the stage. But it appears to be a part of the arrangement that, as Borachio is to address Margaret by the name of Hero, so Margaret is to receive him under the name of Claudio. So much is fairly implied in the expression "hear Margaret term me Claudio." Since Claudio was to witness the encounter, he would of course know that he was not himself the person talking with the supposed Hero, and both he and the prince might well be persuaded that Hero received a clandestine lover, whom she called Claudio, to deceive her attendants, should any be within hearing. This they would naturally deem an aggravation of her offence. The source of the story of Ariodante and Genevra (Ginevra) as given in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* strengthens this interpretation. See Introduction, Sources.

41-42. for in the meantime . . . absent. "Nothing more is said of this. It is simply a difficulty which presents itself to Shakespeare's mind in sketching the plot." — J. C. Smith.

43. truths: true proofs. — jealousy: suspicion.

BORACHIO. Be thou constant in the accusation, and my cunning shall not shame me.

DON JOHN. I will presently go learn their day of marriage. [*Exeunt*] 51

SCENE III. LEONATO'S orchard

Enter BENEDICK alone

BENEDICK. Boy!

Enter Boy

Boy. Signior?

BENEDICK. In my chamber-window lies a book: bring it hither to me in the orchard.

Boy. I am here already, sir. 5

BENEDICK. I know that, but I would have thee hence, and here again. [*Exit Boy*] I do much wonder that one man, seeing how much another man is a fool when he dedicates his behaviours to love, will, after he hath laugh'd at such shallow follies in others, become the argument of his own scorn by falling in love: and such a man is Claudio. I have known when there was no music with him but the drum and the fife, and now had he rather hear the tabor and the pipe: I have known when he would have walk'd

48. thou Ff | you Q.

51. [*Exeunt*] Rowe | Exit QFf.

SCENE III Capell | Scene VIII

Pope. — LEONATO'S orchard | QFf

omit.

2. *Enter Boy* | QFf omit.

7. [*Exit Boy*] Exit QFf (after line 5).

48. Furness suggests that the 'thou' of the Folios indicates an intimacy of evil here between the two. See Abbott, § 231.

SCENE III. Shakespeare's comic scenes are often out of doors.

4. orchard: garden. Cf. I, ii, 8, and see note.

10. argument of: subject for. Cf. I, i, 237.

ten mile afoot to see a good armour, and now will he lie ten nights awake carving the fashion of a new doublet. He was wont to speak plain, and to the purpose, like an honest man and a soldier, and now is he turn'd orthography; his words are a very fantastical banquet, just so many strange dishes. May I be so converted, and see with these eyes? I cannot tell; I think not: I will not be sworn but love may transform me to an oyster, but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool. One woman is fair, yet I am well: another is wise, yet I am well: another virtuous, yet I am well: but till all graces be in one woman, one woman shall not come in my grace. Rich she shall be, that's certain: wise, or I'll none: virtuous, or I'll never cheapen her: fair, or I'll never look on her: mild, or come not near me: noble, or not I for an angel: of good discourse, an excellent musician, and her hair shall be of what colour it please God.

18. orthography Ff | ortography Q | orthographer Rowe.

18. **is he turn'd orthography**: in speech he has become preciseness itself. The abstract ('orthography') has more point than the concrete ('orthographer'). Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, I, ii, 190: "for I am sure I shall turn sonnet."

28. **cheapen**: bargain for. The original meaning, still found in English dialect. Cf. *Pericles*, IV, vi, 10. 'Cheap' originally meant 'exchange of commodities'; in the modern sense it is shortened from 'good cheap.'

29-30. A punning reference to the coins, 'noble' and 'angel.' 'Noble' is punned on similarly in *Richard II*, V, v, 67-68; 'angel,' in *Henry IV*, I, ii, 186-189.

31. **her hair . . . please God**. Usually interpreted as a hit either at wearing false hair or at dyeing the hair. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, III, ii, 92-96; *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV, iii, 258-260. Furness, however, suggests that Benedick, in summing up his requirements in a

Ha! the prince and Monsieur Love: I will hide me in the
arbour. [Withdraws] 33

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and LEONATO

DON PEDRO. Come, shall we hear this music?

CLAUDIO. Yea, my good lord: how still the evening is,
 As hush'd on purpose to grace harmony!

DON PEDRO. See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

CLAUDIO. O very well, my lord: the music ended,
 We 'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth. 39

Enter BALTHASAR *with music*

DON PEDRO. Come, Balthasar, we 'll hear that song again.

BALTHASAR. O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
 To slander music any more than once. 42

33. [Withdraws] Theobald | QFf
 omit.

Wilson Ff | Enter prince, Leonato,
 Claudio, Musicke Q.—Scene IX Pope.

34. *Enter* . . . LEONATO | Enter
 Prince, Leonato, Claudio, and Iacke

40. *Enter* . . . music Q | Ff omit.
 42, 43. F1 repeats these lines.

wife, was unconsciously describing Beatrice, but when he came to the color of the hair, "of a sudden he became aware that he was about to name the very tint of Beatrice's, and the dangerous tendency of his heart flashed upon him. There was a long pause almost of alarm, after 'her hair shall be,' then he adds with a sigh of relief '— of what colour it please God.'"

34. *Enter* DON PEDRO . . . The 'Jack Wilson' mentioned in the stage direction of the Folios was probably the actor who took the part of Balthasar. This is one of the bits of evidence that the First Folio was printed from a copy of the Quarto used in the theatre. See note, IV, ii, 1.

39. kid-fox: fox cub. Warburton suggested 'hid fox,' as probably referring to the game alluded to in *Hamlet*, IV, ii, 32-33. — pennyworth: bargain. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, III, i, 103.

41. good my lord: my good lord. See Abbott, § 13.

DON PEDRO. It is the witness still of excellency
To put a strange face on his own perfection:
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

45

BALTHASAR. Because you talk of wooing, I will sing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit
To her he thinks not worthy, yet he wooes,
Yet will he swear he loves.

DON PEDRO. Nay, pray thee, come,
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

50

BALTHASAR. Note this before my notes;
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

DON PEDRO. Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks,
Note, notes, forsooth, and nothing. [Air] 54

BENEDICK. Now, divine air! now is his soul ravish'd! Is
it not strange that sheep's guts should hale souls out of
men's bodies? Well, a horn for my money, when all's done.

THE SONG

BALTHASAR. Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,

59

54. nothing Qff | noting Rowe.
— [Air] Capell | Qff omit.

58. BALTHASAR | Bal. Capell |
Qff omit.

54. nothing. In this pun may be suggested the Elizabethan pronunciation. The same pun occurs in *The Winter's Tale*, IV, iv, 625. In *Sonnets*, xx, 12, 'nothing' rhymes with 'a-doting.'

56. sheep's guts. Topsell, in his *Historie of Foure-footed Beastes* (1607), describing the uses to which sheep are put, says, "his guts and intrals for Musicke." — hale. Etymologically the same as 'haul.' In *Twelfth Night*, II, iii, 61, music is described as able to "draw three souls out of one weaver."

57. when all's done: after all. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, II, iii, 31.

One foot in sea and one on shore,
 To one thing constant never :
 Then sigh not so, but let them go,
 And be you blithe and bonny,
 Converting all your sounds of woe
 Into Hey nonny, nonny.

65

Sing no more ditties, sing no moe,
 Of dumps so dull and heavy ;
 The fraud of men was ever so,
 Since summer first was leavy :
 Then sigh not so, &c.

70

DON PEDRO. By my troth, a good song.

BALTHASAR. And an ill singer, my lord.

DON PEDRO. Ha, no, no, faith ; thou sing'st well enough
 for a shift.

74

BENEDICK. And he had been a dog that should have
 howl'd thus, they would have hang'd him, and I pray God
 his bad voice bode no mischief. I had as lief have heard
 the night-raven, come what plague could have come after it.

68. was Q | were Ff.

— been Ff | bin Q.

75. And QFf | An Capell | If Pope.

77. lief | lief F1 | liue Q.

66. moe: more. The old comparative of 'many.' In Middle English 'moe,' or 'mo,' was used of number, and with collective nouns ; 'more' had reference specifically to size. 'Ditties' is understood after 'moe.' Cf. *Macbeth*, V, iii, 35.

67. dumps: melancholy. As in *Romeo and Juliet*, IV, v, 129. That this is the meaning of 'dump' here, and not 'melancholy song,' is made clear by 'moe' and the construction generally.

75. been. The Quarto spelling shows the pronunciation.

78. night-raven: a bird of evil omen, identified as a screech owl, night heron, or bittern. Perhaps "imagined as a distinct species." — Murray.

DON PEDRO. Yea, marry, dost thou hear, Balthasar? I pray thee get us some excellent music; for to-morrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber-window. 81

BALTHASAR. The best I can, my lord.

DON PEDRO. Do so: farewell. [*Exit* BALTHASAR]
Come hither, Leonato. What was it you told me of to-day, that your niece Beatrice was in love with Signior Benedick? 86

No CLAUDIO. O, ay, stalk on, stalk on, the fowl sits. I did never think that lady would have loved any man.

LEONATO. No, nor I neither, but most wonderful that she should so dote on Signior Benedick, whom she hath in all outward behaviours seemed ever to abhor. 91

BENEDICK. Is 't possible? sits the wind in that corner?

LEONATO. By my troth, my lord, I cannot tell what to think of it but that she loves him with an enraged affection: it is past the infinite of thought. 95

DON PEDRO. May be she doth but counterfeit.

CLAUDIO. Faith, like enough.

LEONATO. O God! counterfeit? there was never counterfeit of passion came so near the life of passion as she discovers it. 100

83. [*Exit* . . .] In QFf after line 82.

87-88. An allusion to the use of the 'stalking-horse' in fowling, as described, for example, by John Gee in *New Shreds of the Old Snare*: "Methinks I behold the cunning fowler, such as I have knowne in the fenne countries and elsewhere, that doe shoot at woodcockes, snipes, and wilde fowle, by sneaking behind a painted cloth which they carrey before them, having pictured in it the shape of a horse; which while the silly fowle gazeth on, it is knock down with hale shot, and so put in the fowler's budget."

100. **discovers**: reveals. Cf. I, ii, 10; *The Merchant of Venice*, II, vii, 10.

DON PEDRO. Why, what effects of passion shows she?

CLAUDIO. Bait the hook well; this fish will bite.

LEONATO. What effects, my lord? she will sit you, you heard my daughter tell you how.

CLAUDIO. She did, indeed. 105

DON PEDRO. How, how, I pray you? You amaze me: I would have thought her spirit had been invincible against all assaults of affection.

LEONATO. I would have sworn it had, my lord; especially against Benedick. 110

BENEDICK. I should think this a gull, but that the white-bearded fellow speaks it: knavery cannot sure hide himself in such reverence.

CLAUDIO. He hath ta'en th' infection: hold it up. 114

DON PEDRO. Hath she made her affection known to Benedick?

LEONATO. No, and swears she never will: that's her torment.

CLAUDIO. 'Tis true indeed, so your daughter says: 'Shall I,' says she, 'that have so oft encount'ed him with scorn, write to him that I love him?' 121

LEONATO. This says she now when she is beginning to write to him; for she'll be up twenty times a night, and there will she sit in her smock till she have writ a sheet of paper: my daughter tells us all. 125

103. The first 'you' is an ethical dative with the force of 'believe me.' Cf. 'me,' I, iii, 53; III, iii, 131.

111. gull: trick. Usually 'dupe,' and applied to the person tricked. Cf. *Othello*, V, ii, 163.

114. hold it up: keep it going. Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III, ii, 239: "Wink each at other, hold the sweet jest up."

CLAUDIO. Now you talk of a sheet of paper, I remember a pretty jest your daughter told us of.

LEONATO. O, when she had writ it, and was reading it over, she found Benedick and Beatrice between the sheet?

CLAUDIO. That. 130

LEONATO. O, she tore the letter into a thousand halfpence; rail'd at herself, that she should be so immodest to write to one that she knew would flout her: 'I measure him,' says she, 'by my own spirit, for I should flout him if he writ to me, yea, though I love him, I should.' 135

CLAUDIO. Then down upon her knees she falls, weeps, sobs, beats her heart, tears her hair, prays, curses; 'O sweet Benedick! God give me patience!' 138

LEONATO. She doth indeed; my daughter says so: and the ecstasy hath so much overborne her that my daughter is sometime afeard she will do a desperate outrage to herself: it is very true.

DON PEDRO. It were good that Benedick knew of it by some other, if she will not discover it. 144

CLAUDIO. To what end? He would but make a sport of it, and torment the poor lady worse.

DON PEDRO. And he should, it were an alms to hang him: she's an excellent sweet lady, and (out of all suspicion) she is virtuous.

CLAUDIO. And she is exceeding wise. 150

DON PEDRO. In everything but in loving Benedick.

LEONATO. O, my lord, wisdom and blood combating in so tender a body, we have ten proofs to one that blood hath

127. us of Ff | of vs Q.

141. afeard QFf | afraid Rowe.

145. but make Ff | make but Q.

147. And QFf | An Capell.

131-132. halfpence: tiny pieces. Silver halfpence were very small.

the victory: I am sorry for her, as I have just cause, being her uncle, and her guardian. 155

DON PEDRO. I would she had bestowed this dotage on me: I would have daff'd all other respects, and made her half myself. I pray you tell Benedick of it, and hear what a will say.

LEONATO. Were it good, think you? 160

CLAUDIO. Hero thinks surely she will die, for she says she will die, if he love her not; and she will die ere she make her love known; and she will die if he woo her, rather than she will bate one breath of her accustomed crossness. 164

DON PEDRO. She doth well: if she should make tender of her love, 't is very possible he 'll scorn it, for the man, as you know all, hath a contemptible spirit.

CLAUDIO. He is a very proper man.

DON PEDRO. He hath indeed a good outward happiness.

CLAUDIO. Fore God, and, in my mind, very wise. 170

DON PEDRO. He doth indeed show some sparks that are like wit.

LEONATO. And I take him to be valiant. 173

157. daff'd | daft QFf.

158. a Q | he Ff.

170. Fore Ff | Before Q.

173. LEONATO Ff | Claudio Q.

155. The punctuation after 'uncle' is that of the Quarto and Folios. What follows the comma is an effective afterthought.

157. daff'd all other respects: put aside all other considerations. 'Daff' is a variant of 'doff' (i.e. 'do off'). Cf. V, i, 78.

167. contemptible: contemptuous.

168. proper: handsome. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, I, ii, 77.

169. good outward happiness: happy fortune of good looks.

172. wit: wisdom. Cf. line 213; III, v, 56.

173. The Quarto gives this speech to Claudio. "There should be no doubt as to Benedick's valour in the estimation of Claudio, who has been Benedick's companion in arms." — Furness.

DON PEDRO. As Hector, I assure you: and in the managing of quarrels you may say he is wise, for either he avoids them with great discretion, or undertakes them with a most Christian-like fear. 177

LEONATO. If he do fear God, a must necessarily keep peace: if he break the peace, he ought to enter into a quarrel with fear and trembling. 180

DON PEDRO. And so will he do, for the man doth fear God, howsoever it seems not in him by some large jests he will make. Well, I am sorry for your niece. Shall we go seek Benedick, and tell him of her love? 184

CLAUDIO. Never tell him, my lord: let her wear it out with good counsel.

LEONATO. Nay, that's impossible: she may wear her heart out first. 188

DON PEDRO. Well, we will hear further of it by your daughter: let it cool the while. I love Benedick well, and I could wish he would modestly examine himself, to see how much he is unworthy so good a lady. 192

LEONATO. My lord, will you walk? dinner is ready.

CLAUDIO. If he do not dote on her upon this, I will never trust my expectation. 195

DON PEDRO. Let there be the same net spread for her, and that must your daughter and her gentlewomen carry. The sport will be, when they hold one an opinion of another's

175. say Q | see Ff.

177. most Q | Ff omit.

178. a must QFf | he must Rowe.

184. seek Q | see Ff.

192. unworthy Q | unworthy to have Ff.

197. gentlewomen Q | gentlewoman Ff.

174. Probably an allusion to Hector's running from Achilles.

182. large: broad. Cf. 'word too large,' IV, i, 47.

198. another's: the other's. Cf. *King Lear*, III, vii, 71.

dotage, and no such matter: that's the scene that I would see, which will be merely a dumb-show. Let us send her to call him in to dinner. 201

[*Exeunt* DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and LEONATO]

BENEDICK. [*Coming forward*] This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne. They have the truth of this from Hero: they seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me! why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censur'd: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her: they say too that she will rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry: I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions, and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair; 't is a truth, I can bear them witness: and virtuous; 't is so, I cannot reprove it, and wise, but for loving me: by my troth, it is no addition to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me, because I have rail'd so long

201. [*Exeunt* . . . LEONATO] *Exe-*
unt Ff | Q omits.

202. Scene X Pope. — [*Coming*

forward] Globe | B. advances from
the Arbour Theobald | QFf omit.

205. *their* Q | the Ff.

199. *no such matter*: there is nothing of the kind. Cf. *Sonnets*, LXXXVII, 14: "In sleep a king, but waking no such matter."

200. *merely*: purely, entirely, quite. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, III, vii, 8: "The horse was merely lost." The adjective 'mere' (Latin *merus*, pure, unmixed, unqualified) is used similarly.

203. *was sadly borne*: was seriously carried on. Cf. 'with a sad brow,' I, i, 172; 'in sad conference,' I, iii, 54.

205. *bent*: tension. The figure is from the bending of a bow. Cf. IV, i, 181; *The Winter's Tale*, I, ii, 179.

206. *censur'd*: estimated, judged. The original (Latin) meaning.

212. *reprove*: disprove, confute. Cf. *Henry VI*, III, i, 40.

against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? a man loves the meat in his youth that he cannot endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences, and these paper bullets of the brain, awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice: by this day, she's a fair lady! I do spy some marks of love in her.

224

Enter BEATRICE

BEATRICE. Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENEDICK. Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE. I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

230

BENEDICK. You take pleasure, then, in the message?

BEATRICE. Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point, and choke a daw withal: you have no stomach, signior: fare you well.

[*Exit*] 234

BENEDICK. Ha! 'Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner': there's a double meaning in that. 'I took no more pains for those thanks than you took pains to thank me': that's as much as to say, Any pains that I take for you is as easy as thanks. If I do not take pity of her, I am a villain; if I do not love her, I am a Jew. I will go get her picture.

[*Exit*] 241

233. knife's Pope | kniues Qf.

219. sentences: saws, maxims. From the Latin *sententiae*.

233. withal. The emphatic form of 'with.' Cf. *Macbeth*, II, i, 15.

240. I am a Jew. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, II, ii, 119-120: "for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer."

ACT III

SCENE I. LEONATO'S *orchard*

Enter HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA

HERO. Good Margaret, run thee to the parlour:
 There shalt thou find my cousin Beatrice
 Proposing with the Prince and Claudio:
 Whisper her ear, and tell her I and Ursula
 Walk in the orchard, and our whole discourse 5
 Is all of her; say that thou overheard'st us;
 And bid her steal into the pleached bower,
 Where honeysuckles, ripened by the sun,
 Forbid the sun to enter, like favourites,
 Made proud by princes, that advance their pride 10
 Against that power that bred it: there will she hide her,
 To listen our propose. This is thy office:
 Bear thee well in it, and leave us alone.

MARGARET. I'll make her come, I warrant you, presently.
[Exit]

ACT III | Actus Tertius Ff | Q
 omits.—SCENE I Pope | QFf omit.—
 LEONATO'S *orchard* Camb | QFf omit.
 1. *Enter* HERO... URSULA Rowe
 | *Enter* Hero and two Gentlewomen

(Gentlemen Ff), Margaret, and Ursula (Vrsley Q) QFf.
 4. Ursula Ff | Ursley Q.
 12. *propose* Q | *purpose* Ff.
 14. [Exit] F₂F₃F₄ | QF₁ omit.

1. *run thee*. Cf. "Stand thee by," IV, i, 23. See Abbott, § 212.
3. *Proposing*: talking. So 'propose' for 'conversation,' line 12.
4. Ursula. The Quarto spelling represents colloquial pronunciation.
5. *orchard*: garden. Cf. I, ii, 8, and see note.
7. *pleached*: close-roofed with interwoven boughs. Cf. I, ii, 8.

HERO. Now, Ursula, when Beatrice doth come, 15
 As we do trace this alley up and down,
 Our talk must only be of Benedick :
 When I do name him, let it be thy part
 To praise him more than ever man did merit :
 My talk to thee must be how Benedick 20
 Is sick in love with Beatrice : of this matter
 Is little Cupid's crafty arrow made,
 That only wounds by hearsay : now begin,

Enter BEATRICE, behind

For look where Beatrice, like a lapwing, runs
 Close by the ground, to hear our conference. 25

URSULA. The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
 Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
 And greedily devour the treacherous bait :
 So angle we for Beatrice, who even now
 Is couched in the woodbine coverture. 30
 Fear you not my part of the dialogue.

HERO. Then go we near her, that her ear lose nothing
 Of the false sweet bait that we lay for it :

[Approaching the bower]

No truly, Ursula, she is too disdainful,
 I know her spirits are as coy and wild 35
 As haggards of the rock.

URSULA. But are you sure
 That Benedick loves Beatrice so entirely ?

24. *Enter BEATRICE, behind* Steevens | *Enter Beatrice* Q (after line 25)

Ff (after line 23).

33. *[Approaching . . .]* QFf omit

23. only. Limits 'hearsay.' Cf. II, i, 125, and see note.

36. haggards: wild female hawks. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, i, 71.

HERO. So says the prince and my new-trothed lord.

URSULA. And did they bid you tell her of it, madam?

HERO. They did entreat me to acquaint her of it, 40
But I persuaded them, if they lov'd Benedick,
To wish him wrestle with affection,
And never to let Beatrice know of it.

URSULA. Why did you so? doth not the gentleman
Deserve as full as fortunate a bed 45
As ever Beatrice shall couch upon?

HERO. O god of love! I know he doth deserve
As much as may be yielded to a man:
But nature never fram'd a woman's heart
Of prouder stuff than that of Beatrice: 50
Disdain and scorn ride sparkling in her eyes,
Misprising what they look on, and her wit
Values itself so highly that to her
All matter else seems weak: she cannot love,
Nor take no shape nor project of affection, 55
She is so self-endear'd.

URSULA. Sure I think so,
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his love, lest she make sport at it.

HERO. Why, you speak truth: I never yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, young, how rarely featur'd, 60
But she would spell him backward: if fair-fac'd,

42. wrestle | wrastle QFf.

58. she make Ff | sheele make Q.

45. as full as fortunate: as fully as fortunate, fully as fortunate.

52. Misprising: undervaluing. Cf. *As You Like It*, I, i, 177.

60. How: however. — featur'd: fashioned.

61. spell him backward: misconstrue him. "Alluding to the practice of witches in uttering prayers." — Steevens.

She would swear the gentleman should be her sister :
 If black, why, Nature, drawing of an antic,
 Made a foul blot : if tall, a lance ill-headed :
 If low, an agate very vilely cut : 65
 If speaking, why, a vane blown with all winds :
 If silent, why, a block moved with none.
 So turns she every man the wrong side out,
 And never gives to truth and virtue that
 Which simpleness and merit purchaseth. 70

URSULA. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.

HERO. No, not to be so odd, and from all fashions,
 As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable :
 But who dare tell her so ? if I should speak,
 She would mock me into air ; O, she would laugh me 75
 Out of myself, press me to death with wit !
 Therefore let Benedick, like covered fire,
 Consume away in sighs, waste inwardly :
 It were a better death than die with mocks,
 Which is as bad as die with tickling. 80

63. antic | anticke F1 | antique Q.

65. agate | agot QFf. — vilely
 Pope | vildly Q | vildlie F1.

79. better death than | better
 death, then Q | better death, to F1 |
 bitter death, to F2F3F4.

63. black : of dark complexion. — antic : buffoon.

65. agate. An allusion to the diminutive figures cut in agates for rings. In *Romeo and Juliet*, I, iv, 55, Mercutio describes Queen Mab as "In shape no bigger than an agate-stone"; and in *Henry IV*, I, ii, 19, Falstaff comparing himself with Page says, "I was never mann'd with an agate till now."

76. The allusion is to the *peine forte et dure*, a punishment inflicted on those who refused to plead when brought to trial. If they continued silent, they were pressed to death by heavy weights. "Hero means that Beatrice would first reduce her to silence by her mockery, and then punish her for not speaking." — Clar.

URSULA. Yet tell her of it: hear what she will say.

HERO. No, rather I will go to Benedick,
And counsel him to fight against his passion.
And, truly, I'll devise some honest slanders
To stain my cousin with: one doth not know
How much an ill word may empoison liking.

85

URSULA. O, do not do your cousin such a wrong!
She cannot be so much without true judgment
(Having so swift and excellent a wit
As she is priz'd to have) as to refuse
So rare a gentleman as Signior Benedick.

90

HERO. He is the only man of Italy,
Always excepted my dear Claudio.

URSULA. I pray you, be not angry with me, madam,
Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedick,
For shape, for bearing, argument, and valour,
Goes foremost in report through Italy.

95

HERO. Indeed, he hath an excellent good name.

URSULA. His excellence did earn it, ere he had it.
When are you married, madam?

100

HERO. Why, every day, to-morrow. Come, go in:
I'll show thee some attires, and have thy counsel
Which is the best to furnish me to-morrow.

URSULA. She's lim'd, I warrant you: we have caught
her, madam.

89. swift QFf | sweet Rowe.

ing argument QF₁F₂F₈.

91. Signior QFf | Pope omits.

104. Two lines in QFf. — lim'd |

96. bearing, argument F₄ | bear-

limed Q | tane Ff.

96. argument: discourse. Cf. I, i, 237, and see note.

101. every day, to-morrow: every day, beginning to-morrow. Her playful answer is both indirect and direct.

104. lim'd: taken as with birdlime. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, iv, 82.

HERO. If it prove so, then loving goes by haps : 105
Some Cupid kills with arrows, some with traps.

[*Exeunt HERO and URSULA*]

BEATRICE. [*Coming forward*] What fire is in mine ears?
can this be true?

Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorn so much?
Contempt, farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!

No glory lives behind the back of such. 110

And, Benedick, love on; I will requite thee,

Taming my wild heart to thy loving hand:

If thou dost love, my kindness shall incite thee

To bind our loves up in a holy band;

For others say thou dost deserve, and I 115

Believe it better than reportingly. [*Exit*]

SCENE II. *A room in LEONATO'S house*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, and LEONATO

DON PEDRO. I do but stay till your marriage be consummate, and then go I toward Arragon.

106. [*Exeunt HERO and URSULA*]
Exit Ff | Q omits.

room . . . | QFf omit.

107. [*Coming forward*] QFf omit.

1. *Enter DON PEDRO* . . . | *Enter Prince* . . . QFf.

SCENE II Pope | QFf omit. — A

2. go I QF₁F₂ | I go F₃F₄.

107. There is probably an allusion to a belief, common to folklore, which says, "when our ears do glow and tingle, some there be that in our absence doe talk of us" (Holland's *Pliny*). But Shakespeare adds to this; he exalts the glowing and tingling into a fire of purification and illumination.

112. Again the thought of the 'haggards of the rock,' lines 35-36.

116. *better than reportingly*: on better evidence than hearsay.

1-2. *consummate*. The past participle. Cf. 'predestinate,' I, i, 126.

CLAUDIO. I'll bring you thither, my lord, if you'll vouchsafe me. 4

DON PEDRO. Nay, that would be as great a soil in the new gloss of your marriage as to show a child his new coat and forbid him to wear it. I will only be bold with Benedick for his company, for from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth: he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bowstring, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him: he hath a heart as sound as a bell, and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinks his tongue speaks. 12

BENEDICK. Gallants, I am not as I have been.

LEONATO. So say I: methinks you are sadder.

CLAUDIO. I hope he be in love. 15

DON PEDRO. Hang him, truant! there's no true drop of blood in him to be truly touch'd with love: if he be sad, he wants money.

BENEDICK. I have the toothache.

DON PEDRO. Draw it. 20

13. been F₄ | bin QF₁F₂F₈.

3. bring: escort, accompany. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, I, i, 62. So in *Genesis*, xviii, 16; *Acts*, xxi, 25.

6-7. Steevens compares the figure in *Romeo and Juliet*, III, ii, 28-31:

so tedious is this day,
As is the night before some festival,
To an impatient child that hath new robes
And may not wear them.

7. only. Limits Benedick. Cf. II, i, 125, and see note.

10. hangman: executioner (perhaps with a punning reference to the 'fatal knot'), rogue. Cf. *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, IV, iv, 59-60: "stolen from me by the hangman boys."

19. Boswell quotes from Beaumont and Fletcher's *The False One*: "You had best be troubled with the toothache too, for lovers ever are."

BENEDICK. Hang it!

CLAUDIO. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

DON PEDRO. What! sigh for the toothache?

LEONATO. Where is but a humour or a worm?

BENEDICK. Well, every one can master a grief, but he that has it. 26

CLAUDIO. Yet say I, he is in love.

DON PEDRO. There is no appearance of fancy in him, unless it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to be a Dutchman to-day, a Frenchman to-morrow, or in the shape of two countries at once, as a German from the waist downward, all slops, and a Spaniard from the hip upward, no doublet: unless he have a fancy to this foolery, as it appears he hath, he is no fool for fancy, as you would have it appear he is. 35

CLAUDIO. If he be not in love with some woman, there is no believing old signs: a brushes his hat o' mornings: what should that bode? 38

25. can Pope | cannot QFf.

30-33. or in the shape . . . no doublet Q | Ff omit.

35. appear Q | to appear Ff.

37, 45. a QFf | he Rowe.

37. o' Theobald | a QFf.

22. A punning allusion to the old custom of drawing and quartering criminals after hanging them.

24. "*Of the teeth . . .* The cause of . . . aking is humors . . . sometimes teeth be pearced with holes sometime by worms."—S. Batman (in *Batman vppon Bartholome*, London, 1582).

28-29. A quibble on two common Elizabethan meanings of 'fancy': (1) 'love,' as in *The Merchant of Venice*, III, ii, 68; (2) 'caprice,' 'whim,' as in *Hamlet*, I, iii, 71.

29-33. This passage was omitted from the First Folio, possibly to avoid offence to King James and foreign dignitaries at court.

32. slops: baggy breeches. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, II, iv, 46-47: "bonjour! there's a French salutation to your French slop."

DON PEDRO. Hath any man seen him at the barber's?

CLAUDIO. No, but the barber's man hath been seen with him, and the old ornament of his cheek hath already stuff'd tennis-balls. 42

LEONATO. Indeed, he looks younger than he did, by the loss of a beard.

DON PEDRO. Nay, a rubs himself with civet: can you smell him out by that?

CLAUDIO. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in love.

DON PEDRO. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

CLAUDIO. And when was he wont to wash his face? 50

DON PEDRO. Yea, or to paint himself? for the which I hear what they say of him.

CLAUDIO. Nay, but his jesting spirit, which is now crept into a lute-string, and now govern'd by stops.

DON PEDRO. Indeed, that tells a heavy tale for him: conclude, conclude, he is in love. 56

CLAUDIO. Nay, but I know who loves him.

DON PEDRO. That would I know too: I warrant, one that knows him not.

CLAUDIO. Yes, and his ill conditions, and, in despite of all, dies for him. 61

Q. 49. DON PEDRO | Prin. Ff | Bene. governed Dyce.
54. now govern'd QFf | new- 56. conclude, conclude Q | conclude Ff.

50. wash his face: use cosmetics. Lines 45-46 suggest this.

54. Love-songs were usually sung to the lute. Cf. *1 Henry IV*, I, ii, 84. 'Stops,' used here punningly, or 'frets' (cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 388), were ridges of wire or other material, placed on the finger board to regulate the fingering.

60. conditions: qualities. Cf. *Henry V*, IV, i, 108.

DON PEDRO. She shall be buried with her face upwards.

BENEDICK. Yet is this no charm for the toothache. Old signior, walk aside with me: I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you, which these hobby-horses must not hear. [*Exeunt* BENEDICK and LEONATO] 66

DON PEDRO. For my life, to break with him about Beatrice.

CLAUDIO. 'Tis even so: Hero and Margaret have by this played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two bears will not bite one another when they meet. 70

• *Enter* DON JOHN

DON JOHN. My lord and brother, God save you!

DON PEDRO. Good den, brother.

DON JOHN. If your leisure serv'd, I would speak with you.

DON PEDRO. In private? 74

DON JOHN. If it please you: yet Count Claudio may hear, for what I would speak of concerns him.

DON PEDRO. What's the matter?

DON JOHN. [*To* CLAUDIO] Means your lordship to be married to-morrow?

DON PEDRO. You know he does. 80

DON JOHN. I know not that, when he knows what I know.

CLAUDIO. If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it. 83

62. face QF | heels Theobald.

66. [*Exeunt* ... LEONATO] Theobald | QFf omit.

71. Scene III Pope. — *Enter*

DON JOHN Rowe | *Enter* Iohn the Bastard QFf.

78. [*To* CLAUDIO] Rowe | QFf omit.

62. with her face upwards: gazing at her lover, while dying for love. Theobald's reading of 'heels' would mean 'as a suicide.'

65. hobby-horses: buffoons. Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, III, i, 30-33.

72. Good den: good evening. A salutation after midday. Mutilated from 'God give you good even.'

DON JOHN. You may think I love you not: let that appear hereafter, and aim better at me by that I now will manifest: for my brother (I think he holds you well, and in dearness of heart) hath help to effect your ensuing marriage: surely suit ill spent and labour ill bestowed. 88

DON PEDRO. Why, what's the matter?

DON JOHN. I came hither to tell you, and, circumstances short'ned (for she hath been too long a talking of), the lady is disloyal.

CLAUDIO. Who, Hero?

DON JOHN. Even she, Leonato's Hero, your Hero, every man's Hero. 95

CLAUDIO. Disloyal?

DON JOHN. The word is too good to paint out her wickedness; I could say she were worse: think you of a worse title, and I will fit her to it. Wonder not till further warrant: go but with me to-night, you shall see her chamber-window ent'red, even the night before her wedding-day: if you love her, then to-morrow wed her; but it would better fit your honour to change your mind.

CLAUDIO. May this be so?

DON PEDRO. I will not think it. 105

DON JOHN. If you dare not trust that you see, confess not that you know: if you will follow me, I will show you enough, and when you have seen more, and heard more, proceed accordingly. 109

86-87. (I think . . . of heart)
QFf | no parenthesis in Rowe Ham-
mer Camb Globe.

87. hath Ff | has Q.
102. her, then QFf | her then,
Hammer Globe.

85. aim better at me: hit nearer the mark concerning me.

90. circumstances: circumlocutions, needless details. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, v, 127: "without more circumstance at all."

CLAUDIO. If I see any thing to-night why I should not marry her to-morrow in the congregation, where I should wed, there will I shame her.

DON PEDRO. And as I wooed for thee to obtain her, I will join with thee to disgrace her. 114

DON JOHN. I will disparage her no farther, till you are my witnesses: bear it coldly but till midnight, and let the issue show itself.

DON PEDRO. O day untowardly turned!

CLAUDIO. O mischief strangely thwarting! 119

DON JOHN. O plague right well prevented! so will you say, when you have seen the sequel. [Exeunt]

SCENE III. *A street*

Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES with the Watch

DOGBERRY. Are you good men and true?

VERGES. Yea, or else it were pity but they should suffer salvation body and soul.

116. *midnight* Q | *night* Ff.

| QFf omit. — *A street* QFf omit.

121. [Exeunt] F₂F₃F₄ | Exit F₁.

1. Enter . . . VERGES . . . | Enter

SCENE III Capell | Scene IV Pope

. . . his compartner . . . QFf.

116. *coldly*: coolly, calmly. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III, i, 55: "And reason coldly of your grievances."

1. *Enter DOGBERRY and VERGES*. "The first of these worthies had his name from the *dogberry*, i.e. the female cornel, a shrub that grows in the hedges in every county in England. 'Verges' is only the provincial pronunciation of *verjuice*." — Steevens. Halliwell-Phillipps notes that Dogberry occurs as a surname in a charter of the time of Richard II, and quotes from MS. Ashmol. 38 a couplet on a usurer, "Here lyes father Varges, Who died to save charges."

3. *salvation*. Of course he means 'damnation.' The speeches of Dogberry and Verges abound in malapropisms.

DOGBERRY. Nay, that were a punishment too good for them, if they should have any allegiance in them, being chosen for the prince's watch. 6

VERGES. Well, give them their charge, neighbour Dogberry.

DOGBERRY. First, who think you the most desartless man to be constable?

1 WATCH. Hugh Oat-cake, sir, or George Sea-coal, for they can write and read. 12

DOGBERRY. Come hither, neighbour Sea-coal, God hath bless'd you with a good name: to be a well-favoured man is the gift of fortune, but to write and read comes by nature.

2 WATCH. Both which, master constable. 16

DOGBERRY. You have: I knew it would be your answer. Well, for your favour, sir, why, give God thanks, and make no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that appear when there is no need of such vanity. You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch: therefore bear you the lanthorn: this is your charge: you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand, in the prince's name.

2 WATCH. How if a will not stand? 25

11. Oat- | Ote- QFf. — Sea-coal | Sea-coale Ff | Sea-cole Q.

11. George. Halliwell-Phillipps changed this to 'Francis,' identifying the character with him "of the pen and inkhorn," in III, v, 52-53. "But Francis Seacole there mentioned is not necessarily the same person. If this is a slip of Shakespeare's, it is one easily made. In the *Merry Wives*, Page is called Thomas in I, i, 46, and George in II, i, 153." — Clar.

16. Both which: both of them. The omission of the verb enables Dogberry to turn this affirmation cleverly. To insert a dash after 'constable,' as many editors do, weakens the effect.

DOGBERRY. Why, then take no note of him, but let him go, and presently call the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.

VERGES. If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the prince's subjects. 30

DOGBERRY. True, and they are to meddle with none but the prince's subjects: you shall also make no noise in the streets: for for the watch to babble and to talk is most tolerable, and not to be endured.

2 WATCH. We will rather sleep than talk: we know what belongs to a watch. 36

DOGBERRY. Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only have a care that your bills be not stolen: well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid them that are drunk get them to bed. 41

2 WATCH. How if they will not?

DOGBERRY. Why, then let them alone till they are sober: if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for. 45

2 WATCH. Well, sir.

DOGBERRY. If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man: and for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty. 50

2 WATCH. If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

33. to talk Q | talk Ff.

35, 42, 46, 51, etc. 2 WATCH |

Watch QFf.

40. them Ff | those Q.

39. bills. The 'bill' was a kind of halberd used by constables.

DOGBERRY. Truly by your office you may, but I think they that touch pitch will be defil'd: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company. 56

VERGES. You have been always call'd a merciful man, partner.

DOGBERRY. Truly I would not hang a dog by my will, much more a man who hath any honesty in him. 60

VERGES. If you hear a child cry in the night, you must call to the nurse, and bid her still it.

2 WATCH. How if the nurse be asleep and will not hear us?

DOGBERRY. Why, then depart in peace, and let the child wake her with crying, for the ewe that will not hear her lamb when it baes will never answer a calf when he bleats.

VERGES. 'T is very true. 67

DOGBERRY. This is the end of the charge: you, constable, are to present the prince's own person: if you meet the prince in the night, you may stay him. 70

VERGES. Nay, by 'r lady, that I think a cannot.

DOGBERRY. Five shillings to one on 't with any man that knows the statues, he may stay him: marry, not without the

56. your QF₁F₂ | his F₃F₄.

66. he QF₁F₂ | it F₃F₄.

71. by 'r lady Camb | by'r — lady

Capell | birlady Q | birladie Ff. — a

cannot QF₁F₂F₃ | I cannot F₄.

73. statues F₁ | statutes QF₂F₃F₄.

54. From *Ecclesiasticus*, xiii, 1. Cf. 1 *Henry IV*, II, iv, 456-457.

61-62. Probably a burlesque on *The Statutes of the Streets*, printed in 1595, one of which reads: "No man shall, after the hour of nyne at night, keep any rule, whereby any such suddaine outcry be made in the still of the night, as making any affray, or beating his wyfe, or servant, or singing, or revyling in his house," etc.

69. present: represent. Cf. *The Tempest*, IV, i, 167.

71. by 'r lady. Like 'marry' (i.e. Mary), a petty oath by the Virgin. Cf. 'Mass,' line 91, and 'by th' mass,' IV, ii, 47.

prince be willing, for indeed the watch ought to offend no man, and it is an offence to stay a man against his will. 75

VERGES. By 'r lady, I think it be so.

DOGBERRY. Ha, ah ha! Well, masters, good night, and there be any matter of weight chances, call up me: keep your fellows' counsels, and your own, and good night. Come, neighbour. 80

2 WATCH. Well, masters, we hear our charge: let us go sit here upon the church-bench till two, and then all to bed.

DOGBERRY. One word more, honest neighbours. I pray you watch about Signior Leonato's door, for the wedding being there to-morrow, there is a great coil to-night. Adieu: be vigilant, I beseech you. [*Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES*]

Enter BORACHIO and CONRADE

BORACHIO. What, Conrade! 87

WATCH. [*Aside*] Peace! stir not.

BORACHIO. Conrade, I say!

CONRADE. Here, man, I am at thy elbow. 90

BORACHIO. Mass, and my elbow itch'd; I thought there would a scab follow.

77. and QFf | an Rowe.

87. Scene V Pope.

86. vigilant QF1 | vigilant F2F3

F4 Rowe Knight. — [*Exeunt* . . .

VERGES] Rowe | *Exeunt* QF1.

88, 98. WATCH QFf | 2. W. Capell. — [*Aside*] Rowe | QFf omit.

82. church-bench. This bench was inside the church porch.

85. coil: bustle, confusion, turmoil. Cf. V, ii, 86.

91. Mass: by the mass. See note, line 71. — elbow itch'd. Cf. *Macbeth*, IV, i, 44-45: "By the pricking of my thumbs, Something wicked this way comes."

92. scab. Used punningly in the sense of (1) 'scab' and (2) 'contemptible fellow.' Cf. *Twelfth Night*, II, v, 82.

CONRADE. I will owe thee an answer for that: and now forward with thy tale. 94

BORACHIO. Stand thee close then under this pent-house, for it drizzles rain, and I will, like a true drunkard, utter all to thee.

WATCH. [*Aside*] Some treason, masters: yet stand close.

BORACHIO. Therefore know I have earned of Don John a thousand ducats. 100

CONRADE. Is it possible that any villainy should be so dear?

BORACHIO. Thou shouldst rather ask if it were possible any villainy should be so rich, for when rich villains have need of poor ones, poor ones may make what price they will.

CONRADE. I wonder at it. 105

BORACHIO. That shows thou art unconfirm'd: thou knowest that the fashion of a doublet, or a hat, or a cloak, is nothing to a man.

CONRADE. Yes, it is apparel.

BORACHIO. I mean, the fashion. 110

CONRADE. Yes, the fashion is the fashion.

BORACHIO. Tush! I may as well say the fool's the fool: but seest thou not what a deformed thief this fashion is?

WATCH. [*Aside*] I know that Deformed: a has been a vile thief this seven year: a goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name. 116

114. [*Aside*] Capell | QFf omit. he has . . . he goes Pope. — year Q |
114-115. a has . . . a goes QFf | years Ff.

96. true drunkard. That Borachio here refers to the significance of his own name is possible (see note 6, *Dramatis Personæ*), but "the chief allusion is to the fact, expressed in the familiar *in vino veritas*, that a 'true drunkard will utter all.'" — Furness.

103. villainy: villain. A play on 'villainy,' line 101.

106. unconfirm'd: unpractised in the ways of the world.

BORACHIO. Didst thou not hear somebody?

CONRADE. No; 't was the vane on the house.

BORACHIO. Seest thou not, I say, what a deformed thief this fashion is? how giddily a turns about all the hot-bloods between fourteen and five-and-thirty? sometimes fashioning them like Pharaoh's soldiers in the reechy painting, sometime like god Bel's priests in the old church-window, sometime like the shaven Hercules in the smirch'd worm-eaten tapestry?

CONRADE. All this I see, and I see that the fashion wears out more apparel than the man: but art not thou thyself giddy with the fashion too, that thou hast shifted out of thy tale into telling me of the fashion? 128

BORACHIO. Not so, neither, but know that I have to-night wooed Margaret, the Lady Hero's gentlewoman, by the name of Hero: she leans me out at her mistress' chamber-window, bids me a thousand times good night: I tell this tale vilely, I should first tell thee how the prince, Claudio, and my master planted, and placed, and possessed by my master Don John, saw afar off in the orchard this amiable encounter.

CONRADE. And thought they Margaret was Hero? 136

BORACHIO. Two of them did, the prince and Claudio, but the devil my master knew she was Margaret, and partly

125. and I Q | and Ff.

132. vilely Hanmer | vildly QFf.

135. afar QFf | far Pope.

136. they Q | thy Ff.

122. reechy: discolored with smoke, dirty. Cf. 'reeky,' 'reeking.'

124. Hercules is usually represented with a beard, but here the reference may be to a tapestry picture of him shaven and disguised in the service of Omphale (see note, II, i, 230).

131. me. An ethical dative. Here the 'me' has the force of 'bless me!' Cf. I, iii, 53; II, iii, 103.

134. possessed: influenced (or 'informed,' as in line 139).

135. orchard: garden. Cf. I, ii, 8, and see note.

by his oaths, which first possess'd them, partly by the dark night, which did deceive them, but chiefly by my villainy, which did confirm any slander that Don John had made, away went Claudio enraged, swore he would meet her, as he was appointed, next morning at the temple, and there, before the whole congregation, shame her with what he saw o'er night, and send her home again without a husband. 145

I WATCH. We charge you in the prince's name, stand!

2 WATCH. Call up the right master constable: we have here recovered the most dangerous piece of lechery that ever was known in the commonwealth.

I WATCH. And one Deformed is one of them: I know him; a wears a lock. 151

CONRADE. Masters, masters.

2 WATCH. You'll be made bring Deformed forth, I warrant you.

CONRADE. Masters. 155

I WATCH. Never speak: we charge you let us obey you to go with us.

BORACHIO. We are like to prove a goodly commodity, being taken up of these men's bills.

CONRADE. A commodity in question, I warrant you. Come, we'll obey you. [*Exeunt*] 161

142. enraged Ff | enragde Q.

156-157. See note below.

151. lock: lovelock, tied with ribbon and hanging at the ear.

156-157. The Quarto and Folios have "*Conr. Masters, neuer speake, we charge you,*" etc. Theobald arranged the speeches as given above.

158-159. "A cluster of conceits." — Malone. 'Commodity' means 'merchandise' or 'a bargain'; 'taken up' means 'got on credit' or 'apprehended'; 'bills' means 'bonds' or 'halberds.'

160. in question: subject to judicial examination. Cf. *The Winter's Tale*, V, i, 198: "Has these poor men in question?"

SCENE IV. HERO'S *apartment**Enter* HERO, MARGARET, and URSULA

HERO. Good Ursula, wake my cousin Beatrice, and desire her to rise.

URSULA. I will, lady.

HERO. And bid her come hither.

URSULA. Well. [Exit] 5

MARGARET. Troth, I think your other rabato were better.

HERO. No, pray thee, good Meg, I'll wear this.

MARGARET. By my troth's, not so good, and I warrant your cousin will say so.

HERO. My cousin's a fool, and thou art another: I'll wear none but this. 11

MARGARET. I like the new tire within excellently, if the hair were a thought browner: and your gown's a most rare fashion, i' faith. I saw the Duchess of Milan's gown that they praise so. 15

HERO. O, that exceeds, they say.

MARGARET. By my troth, 's but a night-gown in respect

SCENE IV Capell | Scene VI Pope |
QFf omit.—HERO'S *apartment* Globe
| Leonato's House Pope | QFf omit.

5. [Exit Hanmer | QFf omit.
6. rabato Hanmer | rebato QFf.
17. in Ff | it Q.

6. rabato: ruff, collar. Sometimes 'wired support for a ruff.'

8. 's: it is. So in line 17. The subject is sometimes omitted with such forms as 'is,' 'was,' 'has,' 'will.' See Abbott, §§ 400-402.

12-13. tire within . . . hair. The reference is probably to the inner part of a headdress trimmed with false hair.

16. that exceeds: that is surpassing. "As in the French of to-day: 'cela surpasse!'" — Furness.

17-18. night-gown in respect of: dressing gown in comparison with. For 'night-gown,' see *Macbeth*, V, i, 5.

of yours: cloth o' gold, and cuts, and lac'd with silver, set with pearls, down sleeves, side sleeves, and skirts, round underborne with a bluish tinsel: but for a fine, quaint, graceful and excellent fashion, yours is worth ten on 't. 21

HERO. God give me joy to wear it! for my heart is exceeding heavy.

MARGARET. 'T will be heavier soon by the weight of a man. 25

HERO. Fie upon thee! art not asham'd?

MARGARET. Of what, lady? of speaking honourably? Is not marriage honourable in a beggar? Is not your lord honourable without marriage? I think you would have me say, 'saving your reverence, a husband': and bad thinking do not wrest true speaking, I'll offend nobody: is there any harm in 'the heavier for a husband?' None, I think, and it be the right husband, and the right wife; otherwise 't is light, and not heavy: ask my Lady Beatrice else; here she comes.

Enter BEATRICE

HERO. Good morrow, coz. 35

BEATRICE. Good morrow, sweet Hero.

HERO. Why, how now? do you speak in the sick tune?

BEATRICE. I am out of all other tune, methinks.

18. o' gold | a gold Qff.

30. and Ff | & Q | an Capell.

32. and Qff | an Capell.

35. Scene VII Pope.

18-20. cuts. These, different from 'slashes' and often called 'dags,' were the shaped or indented edges of the skirt and long sleeves, often made to resemble letters of the alphabet, leaves, flowers, etc. — down sleeves: close undersleeves. — side sleeves: wide, hanging sleeves. 'Side' (Anglo-Saxon *sid*) still retains in English and Scottish dialect the sense of 'long,' 'trailing.' — round underborne: trimmed round about. — quaint: dainty, elegant.

MARGARET. Clap's into 'Light o' love'; that goes with-out a burden: do you sing it, and I'll dance it. 40

BEATRICE. Ye light o' love with your heels! then, if your husband have stables enough, you'll see he shall lack no barns.

MARGARET. O illegitimate construction! I scorn that with my heels. 45

BEATRICE. 'T is almost five o'clock, cousin; 't is time you were ready: by my troth, I am exceeding ill: heigh-ho!

MARGARET. For a hawk, a horse, or a husband?

BEATRICE. For the letter that begins them all, H.

MARGARET. Well, and you be not turn'd Turk, there's no more sailing by the star. 51

BEATRICE. What means the fool, trow?

MARGARET. Nothing I; but God send every one their heart's desire!

HERO. These gloves the count sent me; they are an excellent perfume. 56

41. Ye QFf | Yes Rowe | Yea Steevens. — o' love Rowe | aloue QF1.

42. see Q | looke F1F2 | look F3F4.
50. and QFf | an Capell | if Pope.

39-40. Clap's: clap us, let us strike briskly. — 'Light o' love.' A popular old dance tune, mentioned also in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I, ii, 83. — burden: bass accompaniment.

43. barns. A punning reference to 'bairns,' children. Cf. *The Winter's Tale*, III, iii, 70; *All's Well that Ends Well*, I, iii, 28.

48-49. Margaret's 'for' means 'for the sake of'; Beatrice's means 'because of.' 'Ache,' the noun, was often pronounced as the letter 'H' is to-day. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV, vii, 8.

50. turn'd Turk: changed for the worse. Cf. *Hamlet*, III, ii, 287. Margaret refers to the success of the trick played on Beatrice.

51. star: polestar. The one sure guide in the heavens.

52. trow: I trow, I wonder. Cf. *Cymbeline*, I, vi, 47; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, I, iv, 140.

BEATRICE. I am stuff'd, cousin ; I cannot smell.

MARGARET. A maid, and stuff'd ! there 's goodly catching of cold.

BEATRICE. O, God help me ! God help me ! how long have you profess'd apprehension ? 61

MARGARET. Ever since you left it. Doth not my wit become me rarely ?

BEATRICE. It is not seen enough ; you should wear it in your cap. By my troth, I am sick. 65

MARGARET. Get you some of this distill'd *Carduus Benedictus*, and lay it to your heart : it is the only thing for a qualm.

HERO. There thou prick'st her with a thistle. 69

BEATRICE. Benedictus ! why Benedictus ? you have some moral in this Benedictus.

MARGARET. Moral ? no, by my troth, I have no moral meaning ; I meant plain holy-thistle. You may think perchance that I think you are in love : nay, by 'r lady, I am not such a fool to think what I list, nor I list not to think what I can, nor, indeed, I cannot think, if I would think my heart

61. *apprehension* : wit, repartee. Cf. 'apprehend,' II, i, 70.

66-67. "*Carduus benedictus*, or blessed Thistell so worthily named for the singular vertues that it hath. . . . Howsoever it be used it strengtheneth all the principall partes of the bodie, it sharpeneth both the wit and the memorie, quickeneth all the senses. . . . For which notable effects this herbe may worthily be called *Benedictus* or *Omnimorbia*, that is a salve for euery sore." — Cogan, *Haven of Health* (1584).

72. *Moral* : inner significance. "Some secret meaning, like the moral of a fable." — Johnson. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV, iv, 78-80 : "but has left me here behind to expound the meaning or moral of his signs and tokens."

out of thinking, that you are in love, or that you will be in love, or that you can be in love. Yet Benedick was such another, and now is he become a man: he swore he would never marry, and yet now in despite of his heart, he eats his meat without grudging: and how you may be converted, I know not, but methinks you look with your eyes as other women do.

BEATRICE. What pace is this that thy tongue keeps?

MARGARET. Not a false gallop. 85

Re-enter URSULA

URSULA. Madam, withdraw: the prince, the count, Signior Benedick, Don John, and all the gallants of the town, are come to fetch you to church.

HERO. Help to dress me, good coz, good Meg, good Ursula. [Exeunt] 90

SCENE V. *Another room in* LEONATO'S house

Enter LEONATO, with DOGBERRY and VERGES

LEONATO. What would you with me, honest neighbour?

DOGBERRY. Marry, sir, I would have some confidence with you that decerns you nearly.

90. [Exeunt] Rowe | QFf omit.

SCENE V Capell | Scene VIII Pope.

— *Another . . . house* | QFf omit.

1. *Enter* LEONATO . . . VERGES

Rowe | *Enter* Leonato, and the Constable, and the Headborough QFf.

81. *grudging*: murmuring. The original meaning. — *how you may be converted*. Cf. Benedick's "May I be so converted," II, iii, 20.

84. Most editors adopt a too formal punctuation in lines 72-83, thus robbing this line of its meaning.

85. *false gallop*: artificial canter. Cf. *As You Like It*, III, ii, 119.

3. *nearly*: particularly. Cf. *King Lear*, I, i, 287.

LEONATO. Brief, I pray you, for you see it is a busy time with me. 5

DOGBERRY. Marry, this it is, sir.

VERGES. Yes, in truth it is, sir.

LEONATO. What is it, my good friends? 8

DOGBERRY. Goodman Verges, sir, speaks a little of the matter, an old man, sir, and his wits are not so blunt, as God help I would desire they were, but in faith honest as the skin between his brows. 12

VERGES. Yes, I thank God, I am as honest as any man living, that is an old man, and no honestest than I.

DOGBERRY. Comparisons are odorous: palabras, neighbour Verges. 16

LEONATO. Neighbours, you are tedious. *19023 See the play*

DOGBERRY. It pleases your worship to say so, but we are the poor duke's officers, but truly for mine own part, if I were as tedious as a king, I could find in my heart to bestow it all of your worship. 21

LEONATO. All thy tediousness on me, ah?

DOGBERRY. Yea, and 't were a thousand pound more

9. of QFf | off Steevens Globe.

23. pound Q | times Ff.

9. of. Dogberry's use of 'of' for 'off' is quite in keeping with his other blunders. See the textual variants.

15. palabras. Probably Dogberry's blunder for *pocas palabras*, 'few words.' Cf. Christopher Sly's 'pauca pallabris,' *The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction, i, 5-6. This scrap of Spanish seems to have been proverbial in Elizabethan London, and was variously corrupted. 'Palaver' is one modern form.

19. poor duke's: duke's poor. The blundering transposition is found also in *Measure for Measure*, II, i, 47-48, 186.

21. of. 'Of' after 'bestow' is found in *Twelfth Night*, III, iv, 2, and *All's Well that Ends Well*, III, v, 103. Cf. 'ride of a horse,' line 35.

than 't is, for I hear as good exclamation on your worship as of any man in the city, and though I be but a poor man, I am glad to hear it. 26

VERGES. And so am I.

LEONATO. I would fain know what you have to say.

VERGES. Marry, sir, our watch to-night, excepting your worship's presence, ha' ta'en a couple of as arrant knaves as any in Messina. 31

DOGBERRY. A good old man, sir, he will be talking as they say, when the age is in, the wit is out, God help us, it is a world to see: well said i' faith, neighbour Verges, well, God's a good man, and two men ride of a horse, one must ride behind, an honest soul i' faith, sir, by my troth he is, as ever broke bread, but God is to be worshipp'd, all men are not alike, alas, good neighbour. 38

LEONATO. Indeed, neighbour, he comes too short of you.

DOGBERRY. Gifts that God gives.

LEONATO. I must leave you.

DOGBERRY. One word, sir, our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two aspicious persons, and we would have them this morning examined before your worship. 44

30. ha' | ha Q | have Ff.

35. and QFf | an Pope.

43. aspicious Globe | aspitious
QFf | auspicious Rowe.

29. to-night: last night. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, II, v, 18.

32. The punctuation of the Quarto and Folios in this speech brings out admirably the rambling, ill-connected talk of Dogberry. The chatter of Flora Fitching in *Little Dorrit* is similarly punctuated.

33-34. "When ale is in, wit is out." — Heywood (*Epigrammes vppon Proverbes*, 1577). — a world to see: well worth seeing.

35. God's a good man. A proverbial tag.

35-36. Here in stage business Dogberry illustrates the proverb by pushing Verges behind him.

LEONATO. Take their examination yourself, and bring it me: I am now in great haste, as it may appear unto you.

DOGBERRY. It shall be suffigance.

LEONATO. 'Drink some wine ere you go: fare you well.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER. My lord, they stay for you to give your daughter to her husband. 50

LEONATO. I'll wait upon them, I am ready.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO and Messenger]

DOGBERRY. Go, good partner, go get you to Francis Sea-coal, bid him bring his pen and inkhorn to the jail: we are now to examination these men.

VERGES. And we must do it wisely. 55

DOGBERRY. We will spare for no wit, I warrant you: here's that shall drive some of them to a non-come, only get the learned writer to set down our excommunication, and meet me at the jail. [*Exeunt*] 59

45. it Q | Ff omit.

47. Exit QFf.

49. *Enter* . . . Rowe | QFf omit.

51. [*Exeunt* . . .] Capell | QFf omit.

54. examination these Q | examine those Ff.

52-53. Francis Sea-coal. See note, III, iii, 11.

57. here's that. Johnson's stage direction is, "touching his forehead." — non-come. A characteristic blunder for 'non compos mentis,' with perhaps a humorous suggestion of 'nonplus.'

ACT IV

SCENE I. *A church*

Enter DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, LEONATO, FRIAR FRANCIS, CLAUDIO, BENEDICK, HERO, BEATRICE, *and* Attendants

LEONATO. Come, Friar Francis, be brief; only to the plain form of marriage, and you shall recount their particular duties afterwards.

FRIAR FRANCIS. You come hither, my lord, to marry this lady. 5

CLAUDIO. No.

LEONATO. To be married to her: friar, you come to marry her.

FRIAR FRANCIS. Lady, you come hither to be married to this count. 10

HERO. I do.

FRIAR FRANCIS. If either of you know any inward impediment why you should not be conjoined, I charge you on your souls to utter it.

CLAUDIO. Know you any, Hero? 15

ACT IV | Actus Quartus Ff | Q
omits.— SCENE I. *A church* Pope |
QFf omit.

1. *Enter* DON PEDRO . . . BEA-

TRICE, *and* Attendants | *Enter* Prince,
Bastard, Leonato, Frier . . . *and* Bea-
trice QFf.

5. lady. QFf | lady? Rowe.

12-14. "This is from our Marriage Ceremony, which (with a few slight changes in phraseology) is the same as was used in the time of Shakespeare."—Douce.

HERO. None, my lord.

FRIAR FRANCIS. Know you any, count?

LEONATO. I dare make his answer, none.

CLAUDIO. O what men dare do! what men may do!
what men daily do, not knowing what they do! 20

BENEDICK. How now! interjections? Why, then, some
be of laughing, as, ah, ha, he!

CLAUDIO. Stand thee by, friar: father, by your leave,
Will you with free and unconstrained soul
Give me this maid, your daughter? 25

LEONATO. As freely, son, as God did give her me.

CLAUDIO. And what have I to give you back, whose worth
May counterpoise this rich and precious gift?

DON PEDRO. Nothing, unless you render her again.

CLAUDIO. Sweet prince, you learn me noble thankfulness.
There, Leonato, take her back again: 31

Give not this rotten orange to your friend;
She's but the sign and semblance of her honour.
Behold how like a maid she blushes here!

O, what authority and show of truth 35
Can cunning sin cover itself withal!

Comes not that blood as modest evidence
To witness simple virtue? would you not swear,
All you that see her, that she were a maid,
By these exterior shows? But she is none: 40
Her blush is guiltiness, not modesty.

20. not . . . do Q | Ff omit.

22. ah, ha, he Q | ha, ha, he Ff.

21-22. The phraseology is that used in Elizabethan school grammars. Cf. Lyly's *Endymion*, III, iii, 5: "An interjection, whereof some are of mourning: as eho, vah!"

LEONATO. What do you mean, my lord?

CLAUDIO. Not to be married,
Not to knit my soul to an approved wanton.

LEONATO. Dear my lord, if you in your own proof
 Have vanquish'd the resistance of her youth — 45

CLAUDIO. I know what you would say: no, Leonato,
 I never tempted her with word too large,
 But, as a brother to his sister, showed
 Bashful sincerity and comely love.

HERO. And seem'd I ever otherwise to you? 50

CLAUDIO. Out on thee seeming! I will write against it,
 'You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
 As chaste as is the bud ere it be blown:
 But you are more intemperate in your blood
 Than Venus, or those pamp'red animals 55
 That rage in savage sensuality.'

HERO. Is my lord well, that he doth speak so wide?

LEONATO. Sweet prince, why speak not you?

DON PEDRO. What should I speak?
 I stand dishonour'd, that have gone about
 To link my dear friend to a common stale. 60

LEONATO. Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?

DON JOHN. Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.

BENEDICK. This looks not like a nuptial.

43. Not to QF₁ | Not F₂F₃F₄.

Seeming! Grant White Globe.

51. thee seeming! | thee seem-
 ing, QFf | thy seeming, Pope | thee!

52. seem QFf | seem'd Hanmer.
 — Dian | Diane QF₁F₂ | Diana F₃F₄.

47. large: free, unrestrained. Cf. 'large jests,' II, iii, 182.

51. Out on thee seeming: away with thy hypocrisy! — against: over
 against. The comma at the end of the line is in both the Quarto and
 the Folios, and introduces lines 52–56 as an object clause.

52. Dian . . . orb: chaste moon in her orbit.

HERO.

'True'! O God!

CLAUDIO. Leonato, stand I here?

Is this the prince? is this the prince's brother? 65

Is this face Hero's? are our eyes our own?

LEONATO. All this is so, but what of this, my lord?

CLAUDIO. Let me but move one question to your daughter,
And by that fatherly and kindly power
That you have in her bid her answer truly. 70

LEONATO. I charge thee do so, as thou art my child.

HERO. O God, defend me! how am I beset!
What kind of catechising call you this?

CLAUDIO. To make you answer truly to your name.

HERO. Is it not Hero? who can blot that name 75
With any just reproach?

CLAUDIO. Marry, that can Hero:

Hero itself can blot out Hero's virtue.

What man was he talk'd with you yesternight

Out at your window betwixt twelve and one?

Now if you are a maid, answer to this. 80

HERO. I talk'd with no man at that hour, my lord.

DON PEDRO. Why, then are you no maiden. Leonato,
I am sorry you must hear: upon mine honour,
Myself, my brother, and this grieved count
Did see her, hear her, at that hour last night 85
Talk with a ruffian at her chamber-window,

71. do so QF2|doe F1|to do F3F4. F2F3F4 Rowe Pope Hanmer.

74. CLAUDIO | Claw. QF1 | Leon. 82. are you Q | you are Ff.

63. Hero's 'True' is repeated from the speech of Don John.

69. kindly: natural. Cf. I, i, 25, and see note.

77. Hero itself: the very name Hero (by becoming a byword).

78. For the omission of the relative see Abbott, § 244.

Who hath indeed most like a liberal villain
Confess'd the vile encounters they have had.

DON JOHN. Fie, fie! they are not to be named, my lord,
Not to be spoke of; 90
There is not chastity enough in language,
Without offence to utter them: thus, pretty lady,
I am sorry for thy much misgovernment.

CLAUDIO. O Hero, what a Hero hadst thou been,
If half thy outward graces had been placed 95
About thy thoughts and counsels of thy heart!
But fare thee well, most foul, most fair! farewell,
Thou pure impiety, and impious purity!
For thee I'll lock up all the gates of love,
And on my eyelids shall conjecture hang, 100
To turn all beauty into thoughts of harm,
And never shall it more be gracious.

LEONATO. Hath no man's dagger here a point for me?

[HERO swoons]

BEATRICE. Why, how now, cousin! wherefore sink you down?

DON JOHN. Come, let us go: these things, come thus to light,
Smother her spirits up. 106

[*Exeunt* DON PEDRO, DON JOHN, CLAUDIO, and Attendants]

BENEDICK. How doth the lady?

BEATRICE. Dead, I think: help, uncle!
Hero! why, Hero! Uncle! Signior Benedick! Friar!

90. spoke Q | spoken Ff.

96. thy thoughts QFf | the thoughts Rowe.

103. [HERO swoons] QFf omit.

106. [*Exeunt* . . .] QFf omit.

107. Scene II Pope.

87. liberal: unrestrained, loose-tongued. Cf. *Othello*, II, i, 165.

97. The alliterative rhythm suggests a lingering farewell.

100. conjecture: suspicion. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, v, 14-15: "for she may strew Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds."

LEONATO. O Fate! take not away thy heavy hand:
 Death is the fairest cover for her shame 110
 That may be wish'd for.

BEATRICE. How now, cousin Hero!

FRIAR FRANCIS. Have comfort, lady.

LEONATO. Dost thou look up?

FRIAR FRANCIS. Yea, wherefore should she not?

LEONATO. Wherefore! why, doth not every earthly thing
 Cry shame upon her? could she here deny 116
 The story that is printed in her blood?

Do not live, Hero; do not ope thine eyes:

For did I think thou wouldst not quickly die,
 Thought I thy spirits were stronger than thy shames, 120

Myself would on the rearward of reproaches

Strike at thy life. Griev'd I, I had but one?

Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame?

O, one too much by thee! why had I one?

Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes? 125

Why had I not with charitable hand

Took up a beggar's issue at my gates,

Who smirched thus, and mir'd with infamy,

I might have said, 'No part of it is mine:

This shame derives itself from unknown loins?' 130

But mine, and mine I lov'd, and mine I prais'd,

And mine that I was proud on, mine so much

121. rearward F₃F₄ | rereward Q |
 reward F₁ | reareward F₂.

128. smirched Q | smeered F₁F₂
 F₃ | smear'd F₄.

117. "The story which her blushes discover to be true."—Johnson.

121. on the rearward of: in the rear of, after.

123. frame: framing, devising. So in line 184.

132. proud on: proud of. See note, III, v, 21.

That I myself was to myself not mine,
 Valuing of her, why, she, O, she is fall'n
 Into a pit of ink, that the wide sea 135
 Hath drops too few to wash her clean again,
 And salt too little, which may season give
 To her foul-tainted flesh!

BENEDICK. Sir, sir, be patient:
 For my part, I am so attired in wonder,
 I know not what to say. 140

BEATRICE. O, on my soul, my cousin is belied.

BENEDICK. Lady, were you her bedfellow last night?

BEATRICE. No, truly not, although, until last night,
 I have this twelvemonth been her bedfellow.

LEONATO. Confirm'd, confirm'd! O, that is stronger made
 Which was before barr'd up with ribs of iron! 146
 Would the two princes lie, and Claudio lie,
Who lov'd her so, that speaking of her foulness,
Wash'd it with tears? Hence from her! let her die.

FRIAR FRANCIS. Hear me a little; 150
 For I have only been silent so long,
 And given way unto this course of fortune,
 By noting of the lady: I have mark'd
 A thousand blushing apparitions
 To start into her face, a thousand innocent shames 155
 In angel whiteness beat away those blushes,

138-140. Sir . . . say | QFf print
 as prose.

147. the two princes Q | the Princes
 F1 | the Prince F2F3F4.

150-153. Hear . . . mark'd | QFf
 print as prose.

156. beat | beate Q | beare F1F2 |
 bear F3F4.

151-153. For . . . lady. For I have only been silent so long and
 allowed things to take their own way because I was watching the lady.
 For 'by' in the sense of 'in consequence of' see Abbott, § 146.

And in her eye there hath appear'd a fire
 To burn the errors that these princes hold
 Against her maiden truth. Call me a fool;
 Trust not my reading, nor my observations, 160
 Which with experimental seal doth warrant
 The tenour of my book: trust not my age,
 My reverence, calling, nor divinity,
 If this sweet lady lie not guiltless here
 Under some biting error.

LEONATO. Friar, it cannot be: 165
 Thou seest that all the grace that she hath left
 Is, that she will not add to her damnation
 A sin of perjury: she not denies it:
 Why seek'st thou then to cover with excuse
 That which appears in proper nakedness? 170

FRIAR FRANCIS. Lady, what man is he you are accus'd of?

HERO. They know that do accuse me; I know none:
 If I know more of any man alive
 Than that which maiden modesty doth warrant,
 Let all my sins lack mercy! O my father, 175
 Prove you that any man with me convers'd
 At hours unmeet, or that I yesternight
 Maintain'd the change of words with any creature,
 Refuse me, hate me, torture me to death!

FRIAR FRANCIS. There is some strange misprision in the
 princes. 180

162. *tenour* Theobald | *tenure* QFf. 180. *princes* QF1 | *prince* F2F3F4.

161-162. with *experimental* . . . *my book*: sets the seal of experience on my reading.

163. *reverence, calling*. Collier changed to 'reverend calling.'

180. *misprision*: mistake, misapprehension.

BENEDICK. Two of them have the very bent of honour;
 And if their wisdoms be misled in this,
The practice of it lives in John the bastard,
 Whose spirits toil in frame of villainies.

LEONATO. I know not: if they speak but truth of her,
 These hands shall tear her; if they wrong her honour, 186
 The proudest of them shall well hear of it.
 Time hath not yet so dried this blood of mine,
 Nor age so eat up my invention,
 Nor fortune made such havoc of my means, 190
 Nor my bad life reft me so much of friends,
 But they shall find, awak'd in such a kind,
 Both strength of limb and policy of mind,
 Ability in means, and choice of friends,
 To quit me of them thoroughly.

FRIAR FRANCIS. Pause awhile, 195
 And let my counsel sway you in this case.
 Your daughter here the princess (left for dead),
 Let her awhile be secretly kept in,
 And publish it that she is dead indeed:

195. ~~thoroughly~~ | thoroughly F4. cesse (left for dead) QFf | princes
 197. ~~princess (left for dead)~~ | Prin- left for dead Theobald Camb.

181. bent. For the metaphor see note, II, iii, 205.

183. practice: scheming. Cf. 'practise,' II, i, 351.

184. frame. Cf. line 130, and see note.

195. quit me of: requite myself regarding.

197. The parentheses are in the Quarto and Folios. That the friar should call Hero 'princess' is in harmony with the formal dignity of his speech. The high standing of Hero's house is indicated by 'family's old monument' (line 201). The term 'princess' was "applied to a female . . . that is likened to a princess in pre-eminence or authority; formerly often to the Virgin Mary, also to female deities, etc." — Murray.

Maintain a mourning ostentation, 200
 And on your family's old monument
 Hang mournful epitaphs, and do all rites
 That appertain unto a burial.

LEONATO. What shall become of this? what will this do?

FRIAR FRANCIS. Marry, this well carried shall on her behalf
 Change slander to remorse: that is some good: 206

But not for that dream I on this strange course,
 But on this travail look for greater birth.

She dying, as it must be so maintain'd,
 Upon the instant that she was accus'd, 210

Shall be lamented, pitied, and excus'd
 Of every hearer: for it so falls out,

That what we have we prize not to the worth,
 Whiles we enjoy it; but being lack'd and lost,

Why, then we rack the value, then we find 215
 The virtue that possession would not show us

Whiles it was ours: so will it fare with Claudio:

When he shall hear she died upon his words,

Th' idea of her life shall sweetly creep

Into his study of imagination, 220

And every lovely organ of her life

Shall come apparell'd in more precious habit,

More moving delicate, and full of life,

200. mourning ostentation: show of mourning.

204. shall become of: is destined to result from.

206. remorse: pity, compassion. Cf. *King Lear*, IV, ii, 73.

215. rack: strain. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, I, i, 182.

220. study of imagination: imaginative reverie.

223. moving delicate. The punctuation is that of the Quarto and the First Folio. Most modern editors hyphen the words. The Second Folio has a comma after 'moving.' For 'moving' in the

Into the eye and prospect of his soul
 Than when she liv'd indeed : then shall he mourn, 225
 If ever love had interest in his liver,
 And wish he had not so accused her :
 No, though he thought his accusation true.
 Let this be so, and doubt not but success
 Will fashion the event in better shape 230
 Than I can lay it down in likelihood.
 But if all aim but this be levell'd false,
 The supposition of the lady's death
 Will quench the wonder of her infamy:
 And if it sort not well, you may conceal her, 235
 As best befits her wounded reputation,
 In some reclusive and religious life,
 Out of all eyes, tongues, minds, and injuries.

BENEDICK. Signior Leonato, let the friar advise you,
 And though you know my inwardness and love 240
 Is very much unto the prince and Claudio,

sense of 'what stirs the emotions' cf. *Richard II*, V, i, 47; *Measure for Measure*, II, ii, 36.

224. **eye and prospect.** So in *King John*, II, i, 208.

226. In the mediæval physiology the liver was the seat of the passions. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, II, iv, 101.

229. **success**: that which follows, outcome, result. The original (Latin) meaning. Cf. 'good success' (*Coriolanus*, I, i, 264), 'bad success' (*Troilus and Cressida*, II, ii, 117).

232. **but this.** The reference is to what follows. "But if (though I hope for better things) we should not in any other respect hit the mark at which we aim, i.e. if we altogether fail to re-establish Hero's character, the supposition of her death will, at all events, stop the tongues of those who would otherwise be exclaiming at her guilt." — Deighton.

235. **sort**: turn out. Cf. V, iv, 7: "all things sort so well."

240. **inwardness**: intimacy.

Yet, by mine honour, I will deal in this
As secretly and justly as your soul
Should with your body.

LEONATO. Being that I flow in grief,
The smallest twine may lead me. 245

FRIAR FRANCIS. 'T is well consented : presently away,
For to strange sores strangely they strain the cure.
Come, lady, die to live : this wedding-day
Perhaps is but prolong'd : have patience and endure.

[*Exeunt all but BENEDICK and BEATRICE*]

BENEDICK. Lady Beatrice, have you wept all this while ?

BEATRICE. Yea, and I will weep a while longer. 251

BENEDICK. I will not desire that.

BEATRICE. You have no reason : I do it freely.

BENEDICK. Surely I do believe your fair cousin is wrong'd.

BEATRICE. Ah, how much might the man deserve of me
that would right her !

BENEDICK. Is there any way to show such friendship ?

BEATRICE. A very even way, but no such friend. 258

BENEDICK. May a man do it ?

249. [*Exeunt . . .*] Exit QFf.

250. Scene III Pope.

244-245. "Men overpowered by distress eagerly listen to the first offers of relief, close with every scheme, and believe every promise. He that has no longer any confidence in himself is glad to repose his trust in any other that will undertake to guide him." — Johnson.

247. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV, iii, 9-11 :

diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are reliev'd,
Or not at all.

249. An Alexandrine, or iambic hexameter verse. — prolong'd : postponed, deferred. Cf. *Richard III*, III, iv, 47.

258. even : plain, straightforward. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, ii, 298.

BEATRICE. It is a man's office, but not yours. 260

BENEDICK. I do love nothing in the world so well as you :
is not that strange?

BEATRICE. As strange as the thing I know not. It were
as possible for me to say I loved nothing so well as you : but
believe me not, and yet I lie not ; I confess nothing, nor I
deny nothing. I am sorry for my cousin. 266

BENEDICK. By my sword, Beatrice, thou lovest me.

BEATRICE. Do not swear by it, and eat it.

BENEDICK. I will swear by it that you love me, and I will
make him eat it that says I love not you. 270

BEATRICE. Will you not eat your word?

BENEDICK. With no sauce that can be devised to it : I
protest I love thee.

BEATRICE. Why, then God forgive me !

BENEDICK. What offence, sweet Beatrice? 275

BEATRICE. You have stayed me in a happy hour : I was
about to protest I loved you.

BENEDICK. And do it with all thy heart.

BEATRICE. I love you with so much of my heart that
none is left to protest. 280

BENEDICK. Come, bid me do any thing for thee.

BEATRICE. Kill Claudio.

BENEDICK. Ha ! not for the wide world.

BEATRICE. You kill me to deny it : farewell.

BENEDICK. Tarry, sweet Beatrice. 285

268. by it Ff | Q omits.

284. it Q | Ff omit.

268. eat it. Beatrice refers to the oath. Cf. *As You Like It*, V,
iv, 155. In line 269 Benedick refers to the sword.

285. In the stage business here Benedick holds Beatrice by the
arm, and in the following speech she struggles to free herself.

BEATRICE. I am gone, though I am here: there is no love in you: nay, I pray you, let me go.

BENEDICK. Beatrice —

BEATRICE. In faith, I will go.

BENEDICK. We'll be friends first. 290

BEATRICE. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with mine enemy.

BENEDICK. Is Claudio thine enemy?

BEATRICE. Is a not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O, that I were a man! what, bear her in hand until they come to take hands, and then with public accusation uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour? O God, that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place.

BENEDICK. Hear me, Beatrice — 300

BEATRICE. Talk with a man out at a window! a proper saying!

BENEDICK. Nay, but, Beatrice —

BEATRICE. Sweet Hero, she is wrong'd, she is sland' red, she is undone. 305

BENEDICK. Beat—?

BEATRICE. Princes and counties! surely a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect, a sweet gallant, surely! O that I were a man for his sake! or that I had

294. a QFf | he Rowe Globe.

But — Rowe Pope Hanmer.

306. Beat—? | Beat— Theobald |
Beat? QF1 | Bett? F2F3 | But? F4 |

308. count, Count Comfect | counte,
counte comfect Q | count, comfect F1.

286. I am gone: my heart is gone from you.

296. bear her in hand: delude her with false hopes. Cf. *Macbeth*, III, i, 81: "How you were borne in hand."

307. counties: counts. So in II, i, 172.

308. Count Comfect: "My Lord Lollipop." — Staunton.

any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too: he is now as valiant as Hercules, that only tells a lie, and swears it: I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving. 315

BENEDICK. Tarry, good Beatrice: by this hand, I love thee.

BEATRICE. Use it for my love some other way than swearing by it.

BENEDICK. Think you in your soul the Count Claudio hath wrong'd Hero? 321

BEATRICE. Yea, as sure as I have a thought, or a soul.

BENEDICK. Enough, I am engag'd; I will challenge him. I will kiss your hand, and so leave you. By this hand, Claudio shall render me a dear account: as you hear of me, so think of me. Go comfort your cousin: I must say she is dead: and so, farewell. [Exeunt] 327

311. courtesies | cursies QF1 | curt-
sies F2 | curtesies F8F4.

324. leave Ff | I leave Q.

327. [Exeunt] F2F8F4 | QF1 omit.

311. melted into courtesies. "Beatrice is still playing on the confectionery metaphor. Cf. *Henry IV*, I, iii, 251: "Why, what a candy deal of courtesy This fawning greyhound then did proffer me!" In *Hamlet*, III, ii, 65, "the candied tongue" was the tongue of courtesy and compliment, as sweet and unsubstantial as comfits and sugar-candy."—Clar.

312. trim ones. 'Trim' used ironically with the connotation of smooth-spoken deceit. 'Ones' refers to 'tongue,' with a change of number not unusual in Elizabethan English.

316. by this hand. His own hand; in line 324, Beatrice's.

SCENE II. *A prison*

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and Sexton, in gowns, and the Watch, with CONRADE and BORACHIO

DOGBERRY. Is our whole dissembly appear'd?

VERGES. O, a stool and a cushion for the sexton.

SEXTON. Which be the malefactors?

DOGBERRY. Marry, that am I and my partner.

VERGES. Nay, that's certain: we have the exhibition to examine.

SCENE II Capell | Scene IV Pope
| QFf omit. — *A prison* Theobald |
QFf omit. — *Enter . . .* | Enter the
Constables, Borachio, and the Towne
Clerke (clearke Q) in gownes QFf.
1, 9, 12, etc. DOGBERRY Capell |

Keeper (Kemp., Kee., Kem.) QFf |
To. Cl. Rowe. (See note below.)
2, 5, etc. VERGES Capell | Cowley
QF1F2F3 | Cowly F4 | Dog. Rowe.
4. DOGBERRY Capell | Andrew Q
Ff | Verg. Rowe.

1. *Enter DOGBERRY . . .* The 'Towne Clerke' of the original stage direction is obviously the sexton of line 2. Malone quotes from *The Black Book* (1604), to show that the official dress of a constable was a black gown.

In this scene the Quarto and Folios give almost all Dogberry's speeches to the famous comic actor Kemp, whose name appears as Keeper, Kee., Kem., etc., and in line 4 as 'Andrew,' probably a nickname given to Kemp from his playing the part of Merry Andrew. The speeches of Verges are given to Cowley. 'William Kempt' and 'Richard Cowly' are in the list of the "Principall Actors in all these Playes" prefixed to the First Folio. "It is possible that this portion of the MS. had got torn or otherwise defaced; perhaps the margin containing the names of the speakers had been torn away, and it had been re-copied by the prompter or some other member of the company, who put the name of the actor instead of the name of the character he represented." — Frank A. Marshall.

5. *exhibition.* A legal term used by Dogberry for 'commission' or 'permission.' Steevens suggests that 'examination to exhibit' is meant.

SEXTON. But which are the offenders that are to be examined? let them come before master constable.

DOGBERRY. Yea, marry, let them come before me: what is your name, friend? 10

BORACHIO. Borachio.

DOGBERRY. Pray write down Borachio. Yours, sirrah?

CONRADE. I am a gentleman, sir, and my name is Conrade.

DOGBERRY. Write down master gentleman Conrade: masters, do you serve God? 16

CONRADE. }
BORACHIO. } Yea, sir, we hope.

DOGBERRY. Write down that they hope they serve God: and write God first, for God defend but God should go before such villains! Masters, it is proved already that you are little better than false knaves, and it will go near to be thought so shortly: how answer you for yourselves? 22

CONRADE. Marry, sir, we say we are none.

DOGBERRY. A marvellous witty fellow, I assure you, but I will go about with him: come you hither, sirrah, a word in your ear, sir, I say to you, it is thought you are false knaves. 27

BORACHIO. Sir, I say to you, we are none.

DOGBERRY. Well, stand aside: fore God they are both in a tale: have you writ down that they are none? 30

17-20. Yea . . . villains Q | Ff omit.

13. Conrade resents the implication of inferiority in 'sirrah.'

17-20. Blackstone suggested that the omission of this passage from the Folios was due to King James's statute against profanity.

25. will go about with: will outwit.

29-30. they are both in a tale: both tell one story.

SEXTON. Master constable, you go not the way to examine: you must call forth the watch that are their accusers.

DOGBERRY. Yea, marry, that's the eftest way, let the watch come forth: masters, I charge you in the prince's name, accuse these men. 35

1 WATCH. This man said, sir, that Don John, the prince's brother, was a villain.

DOGBERRY. Write down Prince John a villain: why, this is flat perjury, to call a prince's brother villain.

BORACHIO. Master constable — 40

DOGBERRY. Pray thee, fellow, peace, I do not like thy look, I promise thee.

SEXTON. What heard you him say else?

2 WATCH. Marry, that he had received a thousand ducats of Don John for accusing the Lady Hero wrongfully. 45

DOGBERRY. Flat burglary as ever was committed.

VERGES. Yea by th' mass, that it is.

SEXTON. What else, fellow?

1 WATCH. And that Count Claudio did mean, upon his words, to disgrace Hero before the whole assembly, and not marry her. 51

DOGBERRY. O villain! thou wilt be condemn'd into everlasting redemption for this.

SEXTON. What else?

2 WATCH. This is all. 55

SEXTON. And this is more, masters, than you can deny: Prince John is this morning secretly stolen away: Hero was

47. VERGES | Const. Qff. — by
th' mass Ff | by masse Q.

55. 2 WATCH Rowe | Watch Qff.
Camb Globe.

33. eftest. Dogberry probably confuses 'eftsoons' and 'deftest.'

49. upon his: in consequence of his (Borachio's). Cf. IV, i, 218

in this manner accus'd, in this very manner refus'd, and upon the grief of this suddenly died: master constable, let these men be bound, and brought to Leonato's: I will go before, and show him their examination. [Exit] 61

DOGBERRY. Come, let them be opinion'd.

VERGES. Let them be in the hands —

CONRADE. Off, coxcomb!

DOGBERRY. God's my life, where's the sexton? let him write down the prince's officer coxcomb: come, bind them: thou naughty varlet!

CONRADE. Away, you are an ass, you are an ass. 68

DOGBERRY. Dost thou not suspect my place? dost thou not suspect my years? O that he were here to write me down an ass! but, masters, remember that I am an ass: though it be not written down, yet forget not that I am an ass. No, thou villain, thou art full of piety, as shall be prov'd upon thee by good witness, I am a wise fellow, and which is more, an officer, and which is more, a householder, and which is more, as pretty a piece of flesh as any is in Messina, and

60. Leonato's Q | *Leonato* Ff.

61. [Exit] QFf omit.

62. DOGBERRY Rowe | Constable Q | Const. Ff.

63-64. VERGES. Let them . . . Off, coxcomb! Malone | *Cowley*. Let them

be in the hands of Coxcombe Q | *Sex*. Let them be in the hands of *Coxcombe* Ff.

68. CONRADE | Conr. Rowe | *Cowley* QF1F2F3 | *Cowley* F4.

76. is in Q | in Ff.

63-64. "The first words may be a corruption of a stage-direction [*Let them bind them*] or [*Let them bind their hands*]." — Camb.

65. God's my life: God save my life. 'God save' is contracted into 'God sa' and then into 'God's.' Cf. 'God's me,' 1 *Henry IV*, II, iii, 97.

67. thou naughty varlet. Addressed to Conrade. 'Naughty' means 'having naught,' 'worthless,' the original signification. So in V, 1, 284; *The Merchant of Venice*, III, ii, 18. Cf. 'naught,' V, i, 153.

76. as pretty a piece of flesh. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, I, v, 30: "as witty a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria."

one that knows the law, go to, and a rich fellow enough, go to, and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him: bring him away: O that I had been writ down an ass! [*Exeunt*] 80

80. [*Exeunt*] Exit QFf.

78. **hath had losses.** "I therefore put in my proud claim to share in the distresses which affect only the wealthy; and write myself down, with Dogberry, 'a fellow rich enough,' but still 'one who hath had losses.'" — Scott, *Quentin Durward*, Introduction.

ACT V

SCENE I. *Before LEONATO's house*

Enter LEONATO and ANTONIO

ANTONIO. If you go on thus, you will kill yourself ;
And 't is not wisdom thus to second grief
Against yourself.

LEONATO. I pray thee, cease thy counsel,
Which falls into mine ears as profitless
As water in a sieve : give not me counsel, 5
Nor let no comforter delight mine ear
But such a one whose wrongs do suit with mine.
Bring me a father that so lov'd his child,
Whose joy of her is overwhelm'd like mine,
And bid him speak of patience, 10
Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine,
And let it answer every strain for strain,
As thus for thus, and such a grief for such,
In every lineament, branch, shape, and form :

ACT V | Actus Quintus Ff | Q
omits.— SCENE...*house* Pope | QFf
omit.

1. *Enter*... ANTONIO | Enter Leo-
nato and his brother QFf.

1, 33, etc. ANTONIO | Brother QFf.

6. *comforter* Q | comfort F1 | com-
fort els F2F3 | comfort else F4.

7. *do* Theobald | doe Q | doth Ff
Rowe Pope.

10. *speak* QFf | speak to me Han-
mer Collier Dyce.

10. A line that is metrically incomplete is not unusual in pas-
sionate speech. See the textual variants for Hanmer's reading.

If such a one will smile, and stroke his beard, 15
 And sorrow, wag, cry hem, when he should groan,
 Patch grief with proverbs, make misfortune drunk
 With candle-wasters : bring him yet to me,
 And I of him will gather patience :
 But there is no such man, for, brother, men 20
 Can counsel, and speak comfort to that grief
 Which they themselves not feel, but, tasting it,
 Their counsel turns to passion, which before
 Would give preceptial medicine to rage,
 Fetter strong madness in a silken thread, 25
 Charm ache with air, and agony with words :
 No, no, 't is all men's office to speak patience
 To those that wring under the load of sorrow,

16. And sorrow, wag, cry hem |
 And sorrow, wagge, crie hem QF₁F₂
 | And hallow, wag, cry hem F₈ Rowe

Pope | And hollow, wag, cry hem F₄ |
 Bid sorrow, wag ; cry, hem ! Capell.
 21. speak QF₁F₂ | give F₈F₄.

16. And sorrow, wag, cry hem. This is generally regarded as the textual crux of the play. Among the many readings suggested by modern editors, Dyce's, based upon Capell's, is the most popular: "Bid sorrow wag, cry 'hem.'" But the text of the Quarto and First and Second Folios yields a satisfactory meaning: he sorrows, but at the same time wags his head, etc. With 'wag' compare 'wagging of your head,' applied to Antonio by Ursula, II, i, 103. To stroke the beard and cry hem was often represented as a common gesture preparatory to the utterance of a wise saying, or to a display of profound book learning. Cf. 'hum' (changed to 'hem' by most editors) in *Troilus and Cressida*, I, iii, 165: "Now play me Nestor; hum, and stroke thy beard."

18. candle-wasters: candle-wasting bookworms. Schmidt gives the general idea of the text as that of drowning grief with the wise saws of pedants. Malone, Staunton, and Dyce hold that the reference is to drunkenness and revelry.

23. passion: suffering, sorrow. The original (Latin) meaning.

24. preceptial medicine: the medicine of precepts.

But no man's virtue nor sufficiency
 To be so moral when he shall endure 30
 The like himself. Therefore give me no counsel:
 My griefs cry louder than advertisement.

ANTONIO. Therein do men from children nothing differ.

LEONATO. I pray thee, peace: I will be flesh and blood,
 For there was never yet philosopher 35
 That could endure the toothache patiently,
 However they have writ the style of gods,
 And made a push at chance and sufferance.

ANTONIO. Yet bend not all the harm upon yourself;
 Make those that do offend you suffer too. 40

LEONATO. There thou speak'st reason: nay, I will do so.
 My soul doth tell me Hero is belied,
 And that shall Claudio know, so shall the prince,
 And all of them that thus dishonour her.

Enter DON PEDRO and CLAUDIO

ANTONIO. Here comes the prince and Claudio hastily. 45

DON PEDRO. Good den, good den.

CLAUDIO. Good day to both of you.

LEONATO. Hear you, my lords?

DON PEDRO. We have some haste, Leonato.

45. Scene II Pope.

47. lords? QFf | lords, — Capell.

30. so moral: so ready to moralize. Cf. *King Lear*, IV, ii, 58.

32. advertisement, admonition. Leonato's reply indicates this.

37. style of gods: divine style (poetry and philosophy).

38. made a push at: pooh-poohed. 'Push' as an interjection was used like 'pish' or 'tush.' Cf. *Timon of Athens*, III, vi, 119. Some editors interpret the expression in the sense of 'shove aside.' — chance: misfortune. Cf. *Antony and Cleopatra*, V, ii, 174. — sufferance: suffering. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, I, iii, 111.

LEONATO. Some haste, my lord! well, fare you well,
my lord:

Are you so hasty now? well, all is one.

DON PEDRO. Nay, do not quarrel with us, good old man.

ANTONIO. If he could right himself with quarrelling, 51
Some of us would lie low.

CLAUDIO. Who wrongs him?

LEONATO. Marry, thou dost wrong me, thou dissembler,
thou:

Nay, never lay thy hand upon thy sword,

I fear thee not.

CLAUDIO. Marry, beshrew my hand, 55

If it should give your age such cause of fear:

In faith, my hand meant nothing to my sword.

LEONATO. Tush, tush, man, never fleer and jest at me:

I speak not like a dotard nor a fool,

As under privilege of age to brag 60

What I have done being young, or what would do,

Were I not old. Know, Claudio, to thy head,

Thou hast so wrong'd mine innocent child and me

That I am forc'd to lay my reverence by,

And with grey hairs and bruise of many days, 65

Do challenge thee to trial of a man:

I say thou hast belied mine innocent child.

Thy slander hath gone through and through her heart,

63. mine Q | my Ff.

49. Are you so hasty now? Cf. Don Pedro's words, I, i, 140-141

53. thou. The familiar form indicates contempt.

57. to: in moving toward.

62. to thy head: to thy face. Cf. *Measure for Measure*, IV, iii, 147

66. trial of a man: manly combat.

And she lies buried with her ancestors,
O, in a tomb where never scandal slept, 70
Save this of hers, fram'd by thy villainy.

CLAUDIO. My villainy?

LEONATO. Thine, Claudio, thine, I say.

DON PEDRO. You say not right, old man.

LEONATO. My lord, my lord,
I'll prove it on his body if he dare,
Despite his nice fence and his active practice, 75
His May of youth and bloom of lustihood.

CLAUDIO. Away! I will not have to do with you.

LEONATO. Canst thou so daff me? Thou hast kill'd my child:
If thou kill'st me, boy, thou shalt kill a man.

ANTONIO. He shall kill two of us, and men indeed, 80
But that's no matter, let him kill one first:
Win me and wear me, let him answer me:
Come follow me, boy, come, sir boy, come follow me,
Sir boy, I'll whip you from your foining fence;
Nay, as I am a gentleman, I will. 85

LEONATO. Brother —

ANTONIO. Content yourself. God knows I lov'd my niece,
And she is dead, slander'd to death by villains,
That dare as well answer a man indeed
As I dare take a serpent by the tongue: 90
Boys, apes, braggarts, Jacks, milk-sops!

75. *nice fence*: skill in fencing.

78. *daff me*: put me aside. See note, II, iii, 157.

82. *Win me and wear me*: defeat me and wear the spoils. A proverbial expression from chivalry, used here as a petty oath in the sense of 'come what may.' — *answer*: meet. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, ii, 176.

84. *foining*: thrusting. Cf. *2 Henry IV*, II, i, 17.

89. *a man indeed*: one who is indeed a man.

LEONATO.

Brother Antony —

ANTONIO. Hold you content. What, man! I know them, yea
 And what they weigh, even to the utmost scruple,
 Scambling, out-facing, fashion-monging boys,
 That lie, and cog, and flout, deprave, and slander, 95
 Go antiquely, and show outward hideousness,
 And speak off half a dozen dang'rous words,
 How they might hurt their enemies, if they durst,
 And this is all.

LEONATO. But, brother Antony —

ANTONIO.

Come, 't is no matter: 100

Do not you meddle, let me deal in this.

DON PEDRO. Gentlemen both, we will not wake your pa-
 tience :

My heart is sorry for your daughter's death:

But, on my honour, she was charg'd with nothing

But what was true, and very full of proof. 105

LEONATO. My lord, my lord —

DON PEDRO. I will not hear you.

LEONATO. No? come, brother, away! I will be heard.

ANTONIO. And shall, or some of us will smart for it.

[*Exeunt* LEONATO and ANTONIO]

94. fashion-monging QF1 | fash-
 ion-mongring F2F8F4.

96. antiquely QF1F2 | antickly
 F8F4 Rowe | anticly Globe.

97. speak off Theobald | speak of Q
 Ff.— dang'rous Ff | dangerous Rowe.

109. [*Exeunt* . . .] Exeunt ambo
 (amb. Q) QFf (after line 108).

94. Scambling: scrambling, shuffling. — out-facing: brazen-faced.

95. cog: "deceive, especially by smooth lies." — Schmidt. Cf. *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, III, iii, 76.

96. antiquely: like an antic or buffoon. — show outward hideousness. Cf. *As You Like It*, I, iii, 122–124.

102. wake your patience: rouse your patience into anger. Cf. 'wake our peace,' *Richard II*, I, iii, 132.

Enter BENEDICK

DON PEDRO. See, see; here comes the man we went to seek.

CLAUDIO. Now, signior, what news? 111

BENEDICK. Good day, my lord.

DON PEDRO. Welcome, signior: you are almost come to part almost a fray.

CLAUDIO. We had like to have had our two noses snapp'd off with two old men without teeth. 116

DON PEDRO. Leonato and his brother. What think'st thou? Had we fought, I doubt we should have been too young for them.

BENEDICK. In a false quarrel there is no true valour: I came to seek you both. 121

CLAUDIO. We have been up and down to seek thee, for we are high-proof melancholy, and would fain have it beaten away. Wilt thou use thy wit?

BENEDICK. It is in my scabbard: shall I draw it? 125

DON PEDRO. Dost thou wear thy wit by thy side?

CLAUDIO. Never any did so, though very many have been beside their wit: I will bid thee draw, as we do the minstrels: draw to pleasure us.

110. Scene III Pope. — *Enter*
BENEDICK | *Enter* Ben. Q | *Enter*
Benedicke Ff (after line 107).

115. like F₂F₈F₄ | likt QF₁.

117. brother. What Globe | brother,
what Ff | brother what Q.

123. high-proof Theobald | high
proofe QFf.

118. doubt: suspect. Cf. 1 *Henry IV*, I, ii, 203–204: "Yea, but I doubt they will be too hard for us."

123. high-proof: in a high degree. The figure is from the testing of arms and armour.

128. draw. The reference is either to the taking of the musical instruments from the cases, or to the passing of the bow across the strings.

DON PEDRO. As I am an honest man, he looks pale. Art thou sick, or angry? 131

CLAUDIO. What, courage, man! What though care kill'd a cat, thou hast mettle enough in thee to kill care.

BENEDICK. Sir, I shall meet your wit in the career, and you charge it against me: I pray you choose another subject.

CLAUDIO. Nay then, give him another staff: this last was broke cross. 137

DON PEDRO. By this light, he changes more and more: I think he be angry indeed.

CLAUDIO. If he be, he knows how to turn his girdle. 140

BENEDICK. Shall I speak a word in your ear?

CLAUDIO. God bless me from a challenge!

BENEDICK. [*Aside to CLAUDIO*] You are a villain: I jest

134. and QFf | an Capell | if Pope.

143. [*Aside to CLAUDIO*] Camb | QFf omit.

134-137. 'Career,' 'charge,' 'staff,' and 'broke cross' are from the language of the tilting field. It was held disgraceful for a tilter to have his spear broken across the body of his adversary, instead of by a push of the point. Cf. *As You Like It*, III, iv, 45-49. In *Ivanhoe*, chap. viii, this kind of mischance is described.

138. *By this light*. A common asseverative phrase. Cf. V, iv, 89; *The Tempest*, II, ii, 154.

139. *think he be*. "'Be' expresses more doubt than 'is' after a verb of thinking." — Abbott, § 299. Cf. *Othello*, III, iii, 384.

140. *turn his girdle*. This proverbial phrase may be used here in the double sense of 'fuss on till he change his humour' and 'offer a challenge.' Cf. *Rob Roy*, chap. xxv: "if ye're angry, ye ken how to turn the buckle o' your belt behind you." Holt White explains the phrase as follows: "Large belts were worn with the buckle before, but for wrestling the buckle was turned behind, to give the adversary a fairer grasp at the girdle. To turn the buckle behind, therefore, was a challenge."

143. "We have introduced the words '*Aside to Claudio*,' because it appears from what Don Pedro says, line 150, 'What, a feast, a

not: I will make it good how you dare, with what you dare, and when you dare: do me right, or I will protest your cowardice: you have kill'd a sweet lady, and her death shall fall heavy on you. Let me hear from you.

CLAUDIO. Well, I will meet you, so I may have good cheer.

DON PEDRO. What, a feast, a feast? 150

CLAUDIO. I' faith I thank him, he hath bid me to a calf's-head and a capon, the which if I do not carve most curiously, say my knife's naught: shall I not find a woodcock too?

BENEDICK. Sir, your wit ambles well, it goes easily. 154

DON PEDRO. I'll tell thee how Beatrice prais'd thy wit the other day: I said thou hadst a fine wit: 'True,' says she, 'a fine little one': 'No,' said I, 'a great wit': 'Right,' says she, 'a great gross one': 'Nay,' said I, 'a good wit': 'Just,' said she, 'it hurts nobody': 'Nay,' said I, 'the gentleman is wise': 'Certain,' said she, 'a wise gentleman': 'Nay,' said I, 'he hath the tongues': 'That I believe,' said she, 'for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he forswore on Tuesday morning: there's a double

156. says F₄ | saies F₁F₂F₃ | said Q.

157. 'Right' | right QFf | just Rowe.

feast?' and from the tone of his banter . . . that he had not overheard more than Claudio's reply about 'good cheer.'" — Camb.

152. capon. Possibly there is a play on 'cap on' (i.e. fool's cap). Cf. *Cymbeline*, II, i, 25–26. — curiously: skillfully.

153. naught: good for nothing. See note, IV, ii, 67. — woodcock. A woodcock was a term for a foolish fellow, that savory bird being supposed to have no brains. Claudio alludes to the stratagem whereby Benedick has been made to fall in love.

159. Just: exactly so. This is the very expression used by Beatrice in II, i, 24.

161. hath the tongues: knows foreign languages.

tongue, there's two tongues': thus did she an hour together trans-shape thy particular virtues, yet at last she concluded with a sigh, thou wast the prop'rest man in Italy. 167

CLAUDIO. For the which she wept heartily, and said she car'd not.

DON PEDRO. Yea, that she did, but yet for all that, and if she did not hate him deadly, she would love him dearly: the old man's daughter told us all. 172

CLAUDIO. All, all, and moreover God saw him when he was hid in the garden.

DON PEDRO. But when shall we set the savage bull's horns on the sensible Benedick's head?

CLAUDIO. Yea, and text underneath, 'Here dwells Benedick the married man'? 178

BENEDICK. Fare you well, boy, you know my mind: I will leave you now to your gossip-like humour: you break jests as braggarts do their blades, which God be thanked hurt not. My lord, for your many courtesies I thank you: I must discontinue your company: your brother the bastard is fled from Messina: you have among you kill'd a sweet and innocent lady. For my Lord Lackbeard there, he and I shall meet, and till then peace be with him. [Exit]

DON PEDRO. He is in earnest.

166. prop'rest | proprest F₁F₂F₈ |
properest F₄ | properst Q.
171. and QFf | an Hanmer.

175. savage QF₁F₂ | salvage F₈F₄.
187. [Exit] Rowe | QFf omit.

165. trans-shape: transform, caricature. Cf. III, i, 61.

173-174. God saw him . . . garden. An allusion to *Genesis*, iii. 8.

175-178. savage bull's horns . . . Benedick's head. Cf. I, i, 242-248.

CLAUDIO. In most profound earnest; and, I'll warrant you, for the love of Beatrice. 190

DON PEDRO. And hath challeng'd thee.

CLAUDIO. Most sincerely.

DON PEDRO. What a pretty thing man is, when he goes in his doublet and hose, and leaves off his wit. 194

Enter DOGBERRY, VERGES, and the Watch, with CONRADE and BORACHIO

CLAUDIO. He is then a giant to an ape, but then is an ape a doctor to such a man.

DON PEDRO. But soft you, let me be: pluck up, my heart, and be sad! Did he not say my brother was fled?

DOGBERRY. Come you, sir, if justice cannot tame you, she shall ne'er weigh more reasons in her balance: nay, and you be a cursing hypocrite once, you must be look'd to. 201

DON PEDRO. How now? two of my brother's men bound! Borachio one!

CLAUDIO. Hearken after their offence, my lord.

DON PEDRO. Officers, what offence have these men done?

195. *Enter DOGBERRY . . . CONRADE . . . Hanmer (after line 198) | Enter Constable, Conrade . . . F1F2 |*

Enter Constables, Conrade . . . Q. — Scene IV Pope.

200. and QFf | an Theobald.

193-194. *when . . . hose*: when he strips himself of his cloak of good sense. 'To be in doublet and hose' also implied 'to be stripped for a duel.'

196. *doctor to*: learned person compared with.

197-198. *pluck up, my heart*: let me take courage. Cf. *The Taming of the Shrew*, IV, iii, 38.

200. *ne'er weigh more reasons*. Dogberry means 'ne'er more weigh,' but is tangled up with 'raisins' and 'reasons.' This pun occurs in *1 Henry IV*, II, iv, 265-266: "if reasons were as plentiful as blackberries."

DOGBERRY. Marry, sir, they have committed false report, moreover they have spoken untruths, secondarily they are slanders, sixth and lastly they have belied a lady, thirdly they have verified unjust things, and to conclude, they are lying knaves. 210

DON PEDRO. First I ask thee what they have done; thirdly I ask thee what's their offence; sixth and lastly why they are committed; and, to conclude, what you lay to their charge.

CLAUDIO. Rightly reasoned, and in his own division, and by my troth there's one meaning well suited. 215

DON PEDRO. Who have you offended, masters, that you are thus bound to your answer? this learned constable is too cunning to be understood: what's your offence?

BORACHIO. Sweet prince, let me go no farther to mine answer: do you hear me, and let this count kill me. I have deceived even your very eyes: what your wisdoms could not discover, these shallow fools have brought to light, who in the night overheard me confessing to this man how Don John your brother incensed me to slander the Lady Hero, how you were brought into the orchard, and saw me court Margaret in Hero's garments, how you disgrac'd her when you should marry her: my villainy they have upon record, which I had rather seal with my death than repeat over to my shame. The lady is dead upon mine and my master's false accusation; and, briefly, I desire nothing but the reward of a villain. 231

208, 212, etc. sixth F4 | sixt QF1F2F3.

214-215. division: arrangement of the matter, order. — well suited: "put into many different dresses." — Johnson. Don Pedro has asked the same question in four modes of speech.

224. incensed: instigated. Cf. *King Lear*, II, iv, 309.

DON PEDRO. Runs not this speech like iron through your blood?

CLAUDIO. I have drunk poison whiles he utter'd it.

DON PEDRO. But did my brother set thee on to this?

BORACHIO. Yea, and paid me richly for the practice of it.

DON PEDRO. He is compos'd and fram'd of treachery,
And fled he is upon this villainy.

CLAUDIO. Sweet Hero, now thy image doth appear
In the rare semblance that I lov'd it first. 239

DOGBERRY. Come, bring away the plaintiffs, by this time
our sexton hath reformed Signior Leonato of the matter:
and, masters, do not forget to specify, when time and
place shall serve, that I am an ass.

VERGES. Here, here comes master Signior Leonato, and
the sexton too. 245

Re-enter LEONATO and ANTONIO, with the Sexton

LEONATO. Which is the villain? let me see his eyes,
That, when I note another man like him,
I may avoid him: which of these is he?

BORACHIO. If you would know your wronger, look on me.

LEONATO. Art thou the slave that with thy breath hast kill'd
Mine innocent child?

BORACHIO. Yea, even I alone. 251

LEONATO. No, not so, villain, thou beliest thyself:
Here stand a pair of honourable men;
A third is fled, that had a hand in it.

232. Prose in Qff.

246. *Re-enter* LEONATO...Sexton
|Enter Leonato Ff | Enter Leonato,
his brother, and the Sexton Q.—
Scene V Pope.

250. Art thou Q | Art thou thou
F1 | Art thou, art thou F2F3F4.

250-251. Art thou . . . innocent
child Q | F1F2F3 print as prose¹ F4
prints as verse.

I thank you, princes, for my daughter's death : 255
 Record it with your high and worthy deeds :
 'T was bravely done, if you bethink you of it.

CLAUDIO. I know not how to pray your patience,
 Yet I must speak. Choose your revenge yourself ;
Impose me to what penance your invention 260
 Can lay upon my sin : yet sinn'd I not,
 But in mistaking.

DON PEDRO. By my soul, nor I ;
 And yet to satisfy this good old man,
 I would bend under any heavy weight
 That he'll enjoin me to. 265

LEONATO. I cannot bid you bid my daughter live ;
 That were impossible ; but, I pray you both,
 Possess the people in Messina here
 How innocent she died, and if your love
 Can labour aught in sad invention, 270
 Hang her an epitaph upon her tomb,
 And sing it to her bones, sing it to-night :
 To-morrow morning come you to my house,
 And since you could not be my son-in-law,
 Be yet my nephew : my brother hath a daughter, 275
 Almost the copy of my child that's dead,
 And she alone is heir to both of us :

268. Possess : inform. Cf. III, iii, 134-139. Frequently so. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, I, iii, 65.

277. This line has called forth varied comments ranging from the supposition of an oversight on Shakespeare's part to an intentional deception by Leonato. See note, I, ii, 23. The explanation seems simple enough. In II, i, 274-275, Leonato says, "take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes"; and in IV, i, 26, he calls Claudio 'son.' In the present case he is not thinking of the number

Give her the right you should have given her cousin,
And so dies my revenge.

CLAUDIO. O noble sir,
Your over-kindness doth wring tears from me! 280
I do embrace your offer, and dispose
For henceforth of poor Claudio.

LEONATO. To-morrow then I will expect your coming;
To-night I take my leave. This naughty man
Shall face to face be brought to Margaret, 285
Who I believe was pack'd in all this wrong,
Hired to it by your brother.

BORACHIO. No, by my soul, she was not,
Nor knew not what she did when she spoke to me,
But always hath been just and virtuous
In any thing that I do know by her. 290

DOGBERRY. Moreover, sir, which indeed is not under white
and black, this plaintiff here, the offender, did call me ass,
I beseech you let it be remem'bred in his punishment, and
also the watch heard them talk of one Deformed, they say
he wears a key in his ear and a lock hanging by it, and
borrows money in God's name, the which he hath us'd so

of children in the family, but of the marriageable daughters, that he
may form an alliance with Claudio. To become his son and heir
there is no way possible but to wed his brother's daughter, for she
alone is left of both the families.

286. pack'd: united in intrigue. Cf. *The Comedy of Errors*, V, i, 219.

290. by: of, about, concerning. See Abbott, § 145.

295. key . . . lock. See note, III, iii, 151. "The pleasantry seems
to consist in Dogberry's supposing that the 'lock,' which Deformed
wore, must have a key to it." — Malone.

296. borrows . . . God's name: asks like a professional beggar.
So in line 298 'lend nothing for God's sake' means 'give nothing to
beggars.' — us'd: practised. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, I, iii, 71.

long, and never paid, that now men grow hard-hearted and will lend nothing for God's sake: pray you examine him upon that point. 299

LEONATO. I thank thee for thy care and honest pains.

DOGBERRY. Your worship speaks like a most thankful and reverend youth, and I praise God for you.

LEONATO. There's for thy pains.

DOGBERRY. God save the foundation!

LEONATO. Go, I discharge thee of thy prisoner, and I thank thee. 306

DOGBERRY. I leave an arrant knave with your worship, which I beseech your worship to correct yourself, for the example of others: God keep your worship! I wish your worship well, God restore you to health! I humbly give you leave to depart, and if a merry meeting may be wish'd, God prohibit it! come, neighbour. 312

[*Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES*]

LEONATO. Until to-morrow morning, lords, farewell.

ANTONIO. Farewell, my lords: we look for you to-morrow.

DON PEDRO. We will not fail.

CLAUDIO. To-night I'll mourn with Hero.

LEONATO. [*To the Watch*] Bring you these fellows on: we'll talk with Margaret, 316

How her acquaintance grew with this lewd fellow.

[*Exeunt, severally*]

307. arrant QF₁F₂F₃ | errant F₄

312. [*Exeunt DOGBERRY and VERGES*] Exeunt Ff (after line 313) Q omits.

316-317. Bring you . . . lewd fellow. Prose in QFf. — [*To the Watch*] Globe | QFf omit. — [*Exeunt, severally*] Theobald | Exeunt QFf.

304. The customary formula of those who received alms at religious houses, but Dogberry probably means 'God save the founder.'

317. lewd: vile, base. Cf. *Richard II*, I, i, 88-91.

SCENE II. LEONATO'S *garden**Enter* BENEDICK *and* MARGARET, *meeting*

BENEDICK. Pray thee, sweet Mistress Margaret, deserve well at my hands by helping me to the speech of Beatrice.

MARGARET. Will you then write me a sonnet in praise of my beauty?

BENEDICK. In so high a style, Margaret, that no man living shall come over it, for in most comely truth thou deservest it. 7

MARGARET. To have no man come over me! why, shall I always keep below stairs?

BENEDICK. Thy wit is as quick as the greyhound's mouth; it catches.

MARGARET. And yours, as blunt as the fencer's foils, which hit, but hurt not. 13

BENEDICK. A most manly wit, Margaret; it will not hurt a woman: and so I pray thee call Beatrice: I give thee the bucklers.

MARGARET. Give us the swords: we have bucklers of our own. 18

SCENE II Capell | Scene VI Pope. omit. — *Enter* BENEDICK ... *meeting*
— LEONATO'S *garden* Steevens | QFf | *Enter* Benedicke and Margaret QFf.

5-6. A play on 'style' and 'stile,' 'come over,' 'comely,' 'go over.' Cf. *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV, i, 98-99:

BOYET. I am much deceiv'd but I remember the style.

PRINCESS. Else your memory is bad, going o'er it erewhile.

9. **keep below stairs**: stay in the servants' room, i.e. "always be a servant and never a mistress." — Furness.

10. The greyhound can catch its victim in full career.

15-16. **give thee the bucklers**: confess myself defeated.

BENEDICK. If you use them, Margaret, you must put in the pikes with a vice, and they are dangerous weapons for maids.

MARGARET. Well, I will call Beatrice to you, who I think hath legs. [Exit MARGARET]

BENEDICK. And therefore will come. 24

[Sings] The god of love,
 That sits above,
 And knows me, and knows me,
 How pitiful I deserve —

I mean in singing, but in loving, Leander the good swimmer, Troilus the first employer of panders, and a whole bookful of these quondam carpet-mongers, whose names yet run smoothly in the even road of a blank verse, why, they were never so truly turn'd over and over as my poor self in love: marry, I cannot show it in rhyme, I have tried, I can find out no rhyme to 'lady' but 'baby,' an innocent rhyme: for 'scorn,' 'horn,' a hard rhyme: for 'school,' 'fool,' a babbling rhyme: very ominous endings: no, I was not born under a rhyming planet, nor I cannot woo in festival terms: sweet Beatrice, wouldst thou come when I call'd thee? 39

25. [Sings] QFf omit.

25-28. QFf print as prose.

31. names QF₃F₄ | name F₁F₂.

34. in rhyme Q | rime Ff.

35, 36. rhyme QF₂F₃F₄ | timeF₁.

38. nor Q | for Ff.

20. pikes: central spikes of bucklers. — vice: screw.

31. carpet-mongers: carpet-knights. Cf. *Twelfth Night*, III, iv, 257-258: "He is knight dubb'd with unhatch'd rapier, and on carpet consideration."

35. innocent: foolish, silly. Cf. the noun, 'innocent,' *King Lear*, III, vi, 8: "Pray, innocent, and beware the foul fiend."

38. festival terms: choice language. Cf. 'holiday and lady terms,' *Henry IV*, I, iii, 46.

Enter BEATRICE

BEATRICE. Yea, signior, and depart when you bid me.

BENEDICK. O stay but till then.

BEATRICE. 'Then' is spoken: fare you well now, and yet ere I go, let me go with that I came, which is, with knowing what hath pass'd between you and Claudio.

BENEDICK. Only foul words, and thereupon I will kiss thee. 46

BEATRICE. Foul words is but foul wind, and foul wind is but foul breath, and foul breath is noisome, therefore I will depart unkiss'd.

BENEDICK. Thou hast frighted the word out of his right sense, so forcible is thy wit: but I must tell thee plainly, Claudio undergoes my challenge, and either I must shortly hear from him, or I will subscribe him a coward: and I pray thee now tell me, for which of my bad parts didst thou first fall in love with me? 55

BEATRICE. For them all together, which maintain'd so politic a state of evil that they will not admit any good part to intermingle with them: but for which of my good parts did you first suffer love for me?

40. *Enter BEATRICE* (see note below). — Scene VII Pope.

40. *Enter BEATRICE*. The arrangement is that of the Quarto, and furnishes a dainty bit of stage business. Most editors follow the First Folio, by putting the entrance with line 38, but place a period after 'terms.' Both the Quarto and the Folio have a colon after 'terms,' thus connecting 'festival terms' with 'sweet Beatrice,' etc.

43. *came*: came for. For such ellipses see Abbott, § 394.

52. *undergoes*: is subject to. Cf. *King John*, V, ii, 99-100.

53. *subscribe*: proclaim over my signature. Furness makes this refer to Benedick's threatened 'protest' in the preceding scene, line 145.

56-57. *so politic a state*: so well organized a society.

BENEDICK. Suffer love! a good epithet! I do suffer love indeed, for I love thee against my will. 61

BEATRICE. In spite of your heart, I think: alas, poor heart! If you spite it for my sake, I will spite it for yours, for I will never love that which my friend hates.

BENEDICK. Thou and I are too wise to woo peaceably.

BEATRICE. It appears not in this confession: there's not one wise man among twenty that will praise himself. 67

BENEDICK. An old, an old instance, Beatrice, that liv'd in the time of good neighbours. If a man do not erect in this age his own tomb ere he dies, he shall live no longer in monument than the bell rings and the widow weeps.

BEATRICE. And how long is that, think you? 72

BENEDICK. Question: why, an hour in clamour and a quarter in rheum: therefore is it most expedient for the wise, if Don Worm (his conscience) find no impediment to the contrary, to be the trumpet of his own virtues, as I am to myself so much for praising myself, who I myself will

71. monument Q | monuments Ff.
— bell rings Q | bells ring Ff.

73. Question: Camb | Question, QFf.

77. myself so much QFf | myself;
so much Rowe | myself. So much
Globe Camb (see note below).

69. time . . . neighbours: "when men were not envious, but every-one gave another his due." — Warburton.

70-71. live . . . monument: be remembered no longer.

73. clamour. This refers to the ringing of the bell, not to the widow's lamentation.

74. in rheum: in tears. Cf. *King John*, III, i, 22.

75. Don Worm: Master Worm. Cf. *Richard III*, I, iii, 222: "The worm of conscience still begnaw thy soul." Cf. *Mark*, ix, 44.

76-77. as I am . . . praising myself: just as I am my own trumpet to such an extent in praising myself. Most editors put a period after 'myself,' an arrangement not commented upon by Furness in the *New Variorum*.

bear witness is praiseworthy: and now tell me, how doth your cousin? 79

BEATRICE. Very ill.

BENEDICK. And how do you?

BEATRICE. Very ill too.

BENEDICK. Serve God, love me, and mend: there will I leave you too, for here comes one in haste. 84

Enter URSULA

URSULA. Madam, you must come to your uncle: yonder's old coil at home, it is proved my Lady Hero hath been falsely accus'd, the prince and Claudio mightily abus'd, and Don John is the author of all, who is fled and gone: will you come presently?

BEATRICE. Will you go hear this news, signior? 90

BENEDICK. I will live in thy heart, die in thy lap, and be buried in thy eyes: and moreover I will go with thee to thy uncle's. [Exeunt]

SCENE III. *A church*

Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO, and three or four with tapers

CLAUDIO. Is this the monument of Leonato?

A LORD. It is, my lord.

85. *Enter URSULA* Q | Ff print Pope | QFf omit. — *A church* Pope | QFf omit.

93. *uncle's* | Vncles QFf.

1. *Enter DON PEDRO, CLAUDIO*

SCENE III Capell | Scene VIII

... | *Enter Claudio, Prince* ... QFf.

85–86. *yonder's old coil*: there's a high old time. Cf. III, iii, 85. 'Old' was a frequent intensive in colloquial speech in the sixteenth century. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, IV, ii, 15.

87. *abus'd*: deceived, imposed on. Cf. *King Lear*, IV, vii, 52–53.

EPITAPH

CLAUDIO. [*Reading*]

Done to death by slanderous tongues

Was the Hero that here lies:

Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,

5

Gives her fame which never dies:

So the life that died with shame

Lives in death with glorious fame.

Hang thou there upon the tomb,

Praising her when I am dumb.

10

Now, music, sound and sing your solemn hymn.

3. EPITAPH QFf | Capell Globe
omit. — CLAUDIO. [*Reading*] QFf
omit.

10. dumb F4 | dombe F1 | dead Q.
11. Now | Claudio. Now Q | Clau.
Now Ff.

3. 'To death' follows "verbs as an adverbial extension expressing result, as 'to slay,' 'beat,' 'stone,' etc., 'to death'; hence 'to do to (the) death.'" — Murray. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, III, ii, 179: "who should do the duke to death." In *3 Henry VI*, I, iv, 108, occurs the expression 'take time to do him dead.' The expression seems to have been common in the sixteenth century. Chapman uses it in his verse translation (1616) of the *Iliad* in the Argument to Book XXII:

Hector . . . to death is done
By pow'r of Peleus angry sonne.

7. with: by. Cf. II, i, 54; III, i, 79–80. See Abbott, § 193.

9–10. Most editors, following Capell, print these lines as if spoken by Claudio after reading the Epitaph. "There seems to be no 'most excellent reason' why these lines should not be also a part of the Epitaph; they will then be an abiding proof to Leonato and to the world that Claudio had himself fulfilled his promise. Why should Claudio in his own person speak two lines of rhyme, when immediately afterward he speaks in prose? I cannot but think that these lines are part of the Epitaph." — Furness.

10. dumb. The old pronunciation approximates that of 'tomb.' See the spelling in textual variants.

SONG

Pardon, goddess of the night,
Those that slew thy virgin knight;
For the which, with songs of woe,
Round about her tomb they go : 15
Midnight, assist our moan ;
Help us to sigh and groan,
Heavily, heavily :
Graves, yawn and yield your dead,
Till death be uttered, 20
Heavily, heavily.

CLAUDIO. Now unto thy bones good night!
Yearly will I do this rite.

DON PEDRO. Good morrow, masters; put your torches out:
The wolves have prey'd, and look, the gentle day, 25
Before the wheels of Phœbus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey:
Thanks to you all, and leave us: fare you well.

CLAUDIO. Good morrow, masters: each his several way.

DON PEDRO. Come, let us hence, and put on other weeds,
And then to Leonato's we will go. 31

CLAUDIO. And Hymen now with luckier issue speed's
Than this for whom we rend'red up this woe. [*Exeunt*]

21. Heavily, heavily | Heavily
heavily Q | Heavily, heavily Ff.

22-23. One line in QFf.

22. CLAUDIO Rowe | Lo. Qff.

23. rite Pope | right QFf.

32. speed's Theobald | speeds QF₁.

13. virgin knight. The maidens of Diana, the chaste goddess, are poetically called knights, or defenders.

19-20. "The slayers of the virgin knight . . . invoke Midnight and the shades of the dead to assist, until *her* death be *uttered*, i.e. proclaimed, published, or commemorated." — Halliwell-Phillipps.

32. speed's : speed us. Some editors defend the form 'speeds.'

SCENE IV. *A room in LEONATO's house*

Enter LEONATO, ANTONIO, BENEDICK, BEATRICE, MARGARET,
URSULA, FRIAR FRANCIS, *and* HERO

FRIAR FRANCIS. Did I not tell you she was innocent?

LEONATO. So are the prince and Claudio, who accus'd her
Upon the error that you heard debated:
But Margaret was in some fault for this,
Although against her will, as it appears 5
In the true course of all the question.

ANTONIO. Well, I am glad that all things sort so well.

BENEDICK. And so am I, being else by faith enforc'd
To call young Claudio to a reckoning for it.

LEONATO. Well, daughter, and you gentlewomen all, 10
Withdraw into a chamber by yourselves,
And when I send for you, come hither mask'd:
The prince and Claudio promis'd by this hour
To visit me: you know your office, brother,
You must be father to your brother's daughter, 15
And give her to young Claudio. [*Exeunt Ladies*]

ANTONIO. Which I will do with confirm'd countenance.

BENEDICK. Friar, I must entreat your pains, I think.

FRIAR FRANCIS. To do what, signior?

BENEDICK. To bind me, or undo me; one of them. 20

SCENE IV | Scene IX Pope | QFf
omit. — *A room* . . . Capell | QFf
omit.

1. *Enter* LEONATO . . . *and* HERO
| *Enter* Leonato, Bene. Marg. Vrsula,

old man, Frier, Hero QFf.

7, 17, etc. ANTONIO | Old. QFf.

10. you QF1 | yong F2 | young

F8F4 Rowe Hanmer.

6. question: investigation, inquiry. Cf. *Henry V*, I, i, 5.

8. by faith: by my pledge. Cf. IV, i, 323-327.

17. confirm'd: unmoved. Cf. *Coriolanus*, I, iii, 65.

Signior Leonato, truth it is, good signior,
Your niece regards me with an eye of favour.

LEONATO. That eye my daughter lent her: 't is most true.

BENEDICK. And I do with an eye of love requite her.

LEONATO. The sight whereof I think you had from me, 25
From Claudio, and the prince: but what's your will?

BENEDICK. Your answer, sir, is enigmatical :
But, for my will, my will is, your good will
May stand with ours, this day to be conjoin'd
In the state of honourable marriage :
In which, good friar, I shall desire your help.

LEONATO. My heart is with your liking.

FRIAR FRANCIS. And my help.

Here comes the prince and Claudio.

Enter DON PEDRO *and* CLAUDIO, *with* Attendants

DON PEDRO. Good morrow to this fair assembly.

LEONATO. Good morrow, prince, good morrow, Claudio :
We here attend you. Are you yet determin'd
To-day to marry with my brother's daughter?

CLAUDIO. I'll hold my mind, were she an Ethiope.

LEONATO. Call her forth, brother: here's the friar ready.

[*Exit* ANTONIO]

23. LEONATO | Leon. QF₁ | Old.
F₂F₈F₄.

33. Here . . . Claudio Q | Ff omit.

34. *Enter* DON PEDRO . . . *with*
Attendants | *Enter* Prince . . . *with*

attendants Ff | Enter Prince and
Claudio and two or three other Q.
— Scene X Pope.

39. [*Exit* ANTONIO] QFf omit.

30. **state.** Johnson changed this to 'estate.'—**marriage.** Probably trisyllabic. Cf. *The Merchant of Venice*, II, ix, 13; *The Taming of the Shrew*, III, ii, 142.

33. comes. For the form, see Abbott, § 335. Cf. I, iii, 53.

DON PEDRO. Good morrow, Benedick: why, what's the matter, 40

That you have such a February face,
So full of frost, of storm, and cloudiness?

CLAUDIO. I think he thinks upon the savage bull:
Tush, fear not, man; we'll tip thy horns with gold,
And all Europa shall rejoice at thee, 45
As once Europa did at lusty Jove,
When he would play the noble beast in love.

BENEDICK. Bull Jove, sir, had an amiable low.

Re-enter ANTONIO, with the Ladies masked

CLAUDIO. For this I owe you: here comes other reckonings.
Which is the lady I must seize upon? 50

ANTONIO. This same is she, and I do give you her.

CLAUDIO. Why, then she's mine: sweet, let me see your face.

LEONATO. No, that you shall not, till you take her hand
Before this friar, and swear to marry her.

CLAUDIO. Give me your hand before this holy friar: 55
I am your husband if you like of me.

HERO. And when I liv'd, I was your other wife,

[*Unmasking*]

And when you lov'd, you were my other husband.

49. *Re-enter ... masked* Capell |
Enter brother, Hero, Beatrice, Mar-
garet, Vrsula QFf.—Scene XI Pope.

51. ANTONIO Theobald | Leo. QFf
Rowe Pope (see note below).
57, 70. [*Unmasking*] QFf omit.

51. The obvious significance of this speech and that in line 16 support Theobald's emendation, given in the textual variants.

55. Many editors put a colon or a period after 'hand.'

56. *like of*. "The *of* after 'to like' is perhaps a result of the old impersonal use of the verb, 'me liketh,' 'him liketh,' which might seem to disqualify the verb from taking a direct object."—Abbott, § 177.

BENEDICK. 'Tis no such matter: then you do not love me?

BEATRICE. No, truly, but in friendly recompense. 80

LEONATO. Come, cousin, I am sure you love the gentleman.

CLAUDIO. And I'll be sworn upon 't that he loves her,
For here's a paper, written in his hand,
A halting sonnet of his own pure brain,
Fashioned to Beatrice.

HERO. And here's another, 85
Writ in my cousin's hand, stol'n from her pocket,
Containing her affection unto Benedick.

BENEDICK. A miracle! here's our own hands against our hearts. Come, I will have thee; but, by this light, I take thee for pity.

BEATRICE. I would not deny you, but, by this good day, I yield upon great persuasion, and partly to save your life, for I was told you were in a consumption. 93

BENEDICK. Peace! I will stop your mouth. [*Kissing her*]

DON PEDRO. How dost thou, Benedick, the married man?

BENEDICK. I'll tell thee what, prince: a college of wit-crackers cannot flout me out of my humour: dost thou think I care for a satire or an epigram? no, if a man will be beaten with brains, a shall wear nothing handsome about him: in brief, since I do purpose to marry, I will think nothing to any purpose that the world can say against it, and therefore never flout at me for what I have said against it: for man is a giddy thing, and this is my conclusion. For

79. such Q | Ff omit.

omit.

94. BENEDICK Theobald | Leon. Q

99. a QFf | he Rowe.

Ff. — [*Kissing her*] Theobald | QFf

100. what QF₈F₄ | F₁F₂ omit.

99. nothing handsome: no fine clothes. See note, I, i, 227.

thy part, Claudio, I did think to have beaten thee, but in that thou art like to be my kinsman, live unbruised, and love my cousin. 106

CLAUDIO. I had well hop'd thou wouldst have denied Beatrice, that I might have cudgell'd thee out of thy single life, to make thee a double-dealer, which out of question thou wilt be, if my cousin do not look exceeding narrowly to thee. 111

BENEDICK. Come, come, we are friends: let's have a dance ere we are married, that we may lighten our own hearts and our wives' heels.

LEONATO. We'll have dancing afterward. 115

BENEDICK. First, of my word: therefore play, music. Prince, thou art sad; get thee a wife, get thee a wife: there is no staff more reverend than one tipp'd with horn.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER. My lord, your brother John is taken in flight, And brought with armed men back to Messina. 120

BENEDICK. Think not on him till to-morrow: I'll devise thee brave punishments for him. Strike up, pipers.

[*Dance. Exeunt*]

122. *Exeunt* | QFf omit.

104-105. *in that*: since, inasmuch as. See Abbott, § 284.

116. *of*: on. Cf. *2 Henry VI*, IV, ii, 103. See Abbott, § 175.

118. *reverend* . . . *horn*. The walking sticks of elderly people were often headed with horn, sometimes shaped like a cross.

122. No other play of Shakespeare closes with a dance.

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